

Emilia Laurila

"I DON'T WANT TO WORK FOR A ROBOT, BUT FOR A HUMAN"

Emotional intelligence in leading an IT organization

ABSTRACT

Emilia Laurila : "I don't want to work for a robot, but for a human" - Emotional intelligence in leading an IT organization
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This case study focuses on how emotional intelligence is perceived by employees and managers on all levels (employees, mid-management, top management and CIO) of an IT-organization. The research questions for the thesis are "What kinds of thoughts do themes of emotional intelligence bring up in the managers of the organization?" and "What kind of relevance do the employees see in using emotions in the leadership of the organization?". The hypothesis of this study is that there is a difference in how themes of emotional intelligence are experienced between the employees and management. This study aims to elevate discussion on emotions in the working life and to challenge the traditional idea of leading with only reason.

Earlier research on emotional intelligence has focused on defining what emotional intelligence is and how it can be applied to different work and life settings. This study utilizes Daniel Goleman's theory on emotional intelligence, which divides emotional intelligence into five subcategories: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social skills. The subcategories enable the analysis of, both, personal and social abilities.

The material for this study was collected through an anonymous questionnaire aimed at the employees as well as through semi-structured interviews conducted with eight of the managers in the organization. The collected questionnaire material was then analyzed and the interview answers thematized and analyzed with assistance from Goleman's theory. The questionnaire's responses formed a base for the understanding of the organization's current situation and the interview answers elaborated on the topics.

The study shows that emotional intelligence is mostly considered important by all levels of the organization. Through the analysis of the questionnaire answers as well as the interviews, a difference in views between the different organizational levels can be seen. The employees and mid-management had similar experiences of the top management not showing sufficient emotions in their leadership. The top managers see the relevance of emotions in leadership, but the expression of emotions was acknowledged difficult. The differences of views in the organization could be attributed to the lack of needed communication, issues in hierarchy or the difference in perceptions of emotional intelligence.

The findings contribute to a larger societal discussion on how leadership and management are perceived. The findings suggest further and deeper research through analyzing, for example, the role of linguistics in emotionally intelligent organizations, the impact of culture, age and gender for emotional abilities and the enablers for an emotionally intelligent organization. Further research would produce even more discussion on the role of emotional intelligence in personal and the working life.

Keywords: emotional intelligence, leadership, communication, Goleman

The originality of this thesis has been checked using the Turnitin OriginalityCheck service.

“But to feel nothing so as not to feel anything—what a waste!”

-André Aciman

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1 Introduction

Emotional intelligence has been in the public discussions in the last decade or so. A lot of the attention can be attributed to Daniel Goleman, who popularized the concept of emotional intelligence with his book *Emotional Intelligence* (1996). However, some of the popularity in the media can also recently be attributed to developing technology in business. It has been argued that as IT infrastructures become consistently more connected to business, emotional intelligence skills are needed in performing IT related tasks (Hendon, Powell & Wimmer 2017: 165).

In addition to the developing IT world, the relevance of emotional intelligence is also visible as more attention seems to be given to humanity. The public discussions seem to move more to human rights, whether discussing developing countries, sexual minority groups or immigrants, leadership being no exception. In March of 2018, YLE (the Finnish public broadcasting company) brought out news about a Finnish movie director, Aku Louhimies, who was said to use exceptional exercise of power (YLE 19.3.2018) in his work. As a manner of leadership, this exercise of power jumpstarted discussions in other areas of business and organizations as well.

It seems clear that there is a gap between the concepts of management and leadership, which is not talked about enough in the working life. It seems to be so that organizations are still trying to manage people as they manage things. Employees and managers exhaust with change but even still people are managed, not led. However, as Kultanen (2009: 12) states, people's wellbeing has been studied since the second world war and the relation between the wellbeing of the employees and productivity has been understood for a long time. This is clear on a theoretical level but perhaps not yet visible on a practical one.

Nonetheless, there is a rising discussion on the role and benefit of emotions. Emotional intelligence in leadership is a rather popularized topic, which can be seen through mediated articles around the internet¹. Camilla Tuominen, author of *"Johda tunteita – menesty työelämässä"* (2018), has gained popularity as an emotion consultant. She

¹ e.g. MindTools, 6G, Management Centre and The Gottman Institute.

trains companies on understanding and leading emotions. Daniel Goleman (1998) also wrote about emotional intelligence in the workplace, arguing that success is mostly about emotional intelligence and that traditional intelligence is secondary. The more these topics are discussed, the more they influence leadership.

The topic has previously been researched by a myriad of scientists. Kultanen (2009) wrote a dissertation, where he researched emotional intelligence skills in an IT-organization. In the dissertation, he planned, executed and evaluated a manager training program, which focused on how a psychologically oriented manager training could contribute to better leadership skills (Kultanen 2009:1). Mayer, Salovey and Caruso (2011) formed a test (MSCEIT), which measures emotional intelligence. The model is based on Mayer and Salovey's four branches of emotional intelligence: perceiving emotions, facilitating thought, understanding emotions and managing emotions. Goleman (1998) connected his theory of emotional intelligence to the working life stating that traditional IQ comes second to emotional intelligence. This prior research paves the way for research on emotional intelligence in the current working life and the challenges the rapidly changing world sets.

This case study focuses on how emotional intelligence is experienced and used in the management of an IT organization. It aims to increase understanding on what ideas and thoughts themes of emotional intelligence bring up in the managers and employees of the case organization and to gather information on what kind of relevance the employees see in using emotions in leadership. It aims to understand different sides of the organization, from employees to the top of the management. To achieve this, the study was conducted as a combination of a questionnaire and interview study. The anonymous questionnaire aims to research the thoughts of the employees and to form an overall picture of how the current situation is perceived. The semi-structured interviews were formed based on the questionnaire responses received as well as Daniel Goleman's theory of emotional intelligence. The theory was chosen as it offers a clear description and division of what emotional intelligence is as well as focuses on, both, the internal and external (personal and social) abilities of the topic. The interviews were conducted on eight managers from different levels in the organization. The responses

were then thematized and analyzed based on Goleman's categories of emotional intelligence.

The aim of this study is to elevate discussion on emotions and how in the business world they have long had a reputation as something inferior to reason. This study aims to question if complete rationality is the most efficient way to lead companies and to argue that when expressed, emotions should be authentic, not fabricated with the hope of benefitting from them. The hypothesis of this study is that there is a difference in how themes of emotional intelligence are experienced between the employees and management.

It is also worth mentioning that my personal experiences with the company are relevant in this study. Prior to the study, I had worked with the company for three years, so the people interviewed, and the situations described were not fully viewed from the outside.

2 Theoretical framework

2.1 Managing vs. leading change

In today's business world, change appears to be constant and quick. Murthy (2007: 2) states that rapidly developing technologies and the strain that development puts on employees as well as management is vast. The digitalization of work, for example, can generate fear and resistance in the existing employees, which requires effective leading through change. Globalizing companies is another example of the changing workplace. Understanding cultures, ways of working as well as managing people are topics which the manager will be affected by.

Murthy (2007: 2-3) explains that change is a variation of people, structure or technology. The aim of change is to improve organizational performance and it is always a part of a manager's job. Murthy also divides the sources of the need for change into internal and external forces (figure 1). External forces create the need for change from multiple sources, for example, the marketplace, government laws and regulations, technology or economic changes. The internal forces can stimulate the need for change and originate primarily from internal operations in the company or from the impact of outside, but still company connected, changes. In practice this means modifying strategies, introducing new equipment, redesigning new jobs and new interaction patterns within work groups or employee attitudes. This division is simple to understand as the internal forces of change come from operations inside the organization or deeply affecting the dynamics of the organization. External forces, then, are exposed to changes in institutions of a larger scale.

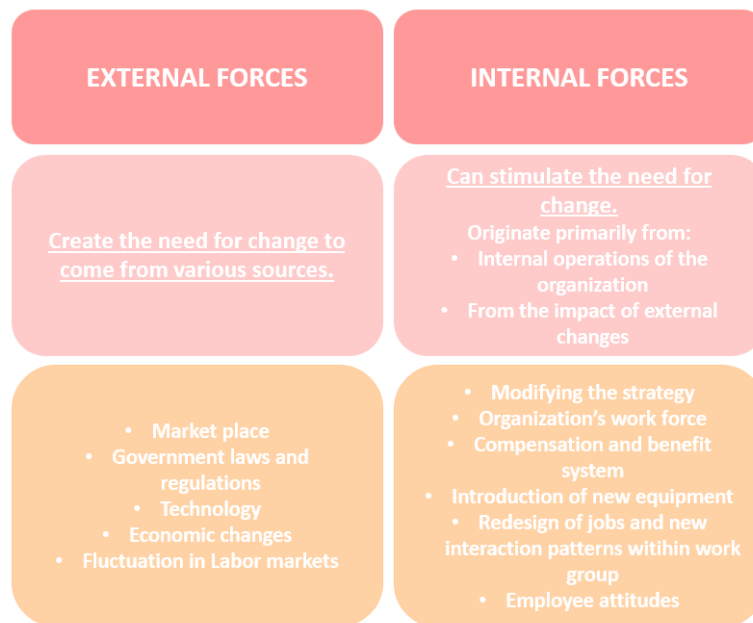


Figure 1: External and internal forces of change (Murthy 2007: 2-3)

Another division by Murthy (2007: 8) states that changes happen on three levels: macro, micro and organizational change. By macro change, Murthy means the changes that significantly affect people globally. Micro change means changes that people face in their personal lives. Organizational change is the changes in organizations that influence peoples' lives. Regardless of Murthy's division, it can be argued whether the three levels of change are unrelated to each other. Organizational changes can be closely related, for example, to micro change when considering that what happens in a work organization can easily lead to personal changes as well. The grey areas cannot therefore be completely forgotten when talking about the levels of change.

The concepts of change management and change leadership seem to be used interchangeably at times but hold very different meanings. Mulligan and Barber [1998] explain the term management as technical aspects of change such as planning or organizing and leadership as the social and emotional considerations (Gill 2002: 309). Bohoris and Vorria (2008: 2) define management as a process used to accomplish organizational goals and leadership as setting direction, motivating and inspiring. It can thus be argued that the division between leadership and management is that things are managed, and people are led. It is then leadership that helps execute the plans of effective change management. Leadership is the enabler for change, for utilizing the resources that change management allocates. It is the humane side of effective change.

As the definitions of leadership closely resemble ideas of emotional intelligence discussed further in this thesis, it should be considered that increasing emotional intelligence could work as a bridge from managing organizations to leading them. It is after all "... the people who will ultimately cause the change to be a success or a failure" (Murthy 2007: 23).

Gill (2002: 308) states that the reason a change fails is poor management, which means the lack of planning, monitoring and control, forgetting milestones, and focusing more on the goal than the actual process. Monitoring the progress and correcting the route are also important steps in managing change. Change efforts can lack the necessary resources, such as budget, systems, time and information, as well as the necessary expertise. However, it is not solely the manageable units of change that the failure resides in. It is also necessary to consider the role of leadership and especially transparent communication in organizational changes. Miller, Johnson and Grau (1994:72) found out that there is a link between sharing information and resistance to change. Timely and useful information regarding the change had a positive effect to how the actual change was embraced. Miller, Johnson and Grau (1994: 73-74) also found that the information received on brink of change had an effect on the employees' attitudes to the change on two levels. Firstly, as mentioned above, useful and timely information lessened the employees' resistance to change. Thus, the content and circulation of the change communication should be carefully planned. Secondly, the employees' information environment had a significant influence on the announced information. Well-informed employees should be included in social information networks and to understand other employees' expectations of their role. Employees, who are well-informed have a stronger connection to the organization and through that are more inclined to receive information regarding the company's changes. Gill (2002: 308) brings out a similar point stating that the lack of commitment to change could be because of the lack of compelling evidence on the benefits of the change.

Murthy (2007: 53) explains the importance of self-awareness in leading. He cites Goleman, whose theory of emotional intelligence has self-awareness at its heart and mentions it as one of the personal characteristics of leadership along with self-analysis, self-efficacy and self-esteem and self-worth. As the most powerful forces of change

resistance are emotional (Gill 2002: 308), the road to effective leadership is then to respond to these emotions with empathy, for example.

Gill (2002: 311-312) sees that leadership theory has evolved into four tracks which have never fully converged: cognitive intelligence, spiritual intelligence, emotional intelligence and behavioral skills. Cognitive intelligence (thinking) is the ability to perceive and understand information, reason with it, imagine possibilities, use intuition, solve problems and make decisions. These abilities produce vision, mission and strategies that appeal to others' intellect. Spiritual intelligence (meaning) revolves around meaning and sense of worth that animate people in what they do. The spiritual intelligence is closely related to vision and shared values. Emotional intelligence (feeling) is a trait that effective leadership requires. Understanding oneself and others as well as responding to others in appropriate ways and using personal instead of professional power are qualities of an emotionally intelligent leader. Emotional intelligence is important in promoting the shared values and vision, mission and strategy. The behavioral skills (doing) are then the communication - writing, speaking, listening and body language - skills of leadership.

Together these intelligences form an idea of what leadership has evolved into. I argue that even though the tracks explained by Gill above are said to not have united in research in a useful way, they still have qualities that strengthen a leader's skills. For example, behavioral skills often require emotional intelligence to be considered good leadership or cognitive intelligence together with spiritual intelligence enables creating values and missions that suit both the company's as well as the employees' needs. So, although the research on leadership may remain in separate tracks, in practice, they should not.

To conclude, there is a difference between managing and leading. The biggest difference comes from what is the object of the action, is it things or is it people. Through understanding how change is constructed, it is easier to understand how it should be led. It is not only the process of change that is often unclear, but also the terminology and semantics regarding management terminology. The terms management, manager or manage are often used in organizations to discuss leading a company. As change, for example, is a highly emotion provoking circumstance, it should be led with people in

mind. It is, however, not either management or leadership, but instead both interchangeably. In order to drive through an effective change, it needs to be well managed through planning and organizing as well as well led through social skills. As Gill (2002: 309) stated:

“If change is a process of taking an organisation (or a nation) on a journey from its current state to a desired future state and dealing with all the problems that arise along the journey, then change is about leadership as well as management.”

2.2 Emotions in the working life

The role of emotions has for a long time been under debate. Warner [2010] stated that emotions have been considered as hindrances that stand in the way of reason and decision making (Dhani and Sharma 2016: 189). However, they do serve a great purpose in human behavior. Goleman (1996: 6-7) lists examples of the biological meanings of emotions. Anger, for example, is described as the emotion, where blood flows to hands to make it easier to grasp a weapon, heart rate increases and hormones, such as adrenaline, help one to take vigorous action. He also describes the lifting of eyebrows in surprise as taking in a larger visual space, which lets in more light onto the retina. Through this, one gains more information of the unexpected event, which makes it easier to figure out what is happening as well as to form an action plan. Salmela (2014: 3) states that the function of emotions is to analyze changes in one's environment and their relevance to the individual as well as to form a corresponding response to the situation. He also suggests that emotions are evolutionarily or culturally bound or as it often is, a combination of the two.

Psychologically, emotions hold a great purpose. Peter and Salovey (2011: 530) state that emotions are one of three or four fundamental classes of mental operations called motivation, emotion cognition, and consciousness. These classes are the categories for larger entities of survival drives such as hunger, thirst and sexual desires. Izard (2009) divides emotions into two categories: basic emotions and emotion schemas. She also states that the difficulty in separating between these two is often the source of many misunderstandings. Basic emotions she divides into basic positive and basic negative

emotions. Basic positive emotions of interest and joy are considered equally important for survival, evolution and development and are subject to developmental changes. These emotions differ in length as well as structure meaning that experiences of joy may be briefer than experiences of interest. Basic negative emotions Izard (2009) lists to be sadness, anger, fear and disgust. These emotions are seen to be automated and to run their course in a short period of time.

An important point to the discussion on emotions is brought by Lerner et al. (2014: 801), who argue that as research on emotions and decision making has increased, it has become apparent that humans are more inclined to make decisions that aim towards positive emotions. They state that decisions can be considered as channels through which emotions guide daily attempts to avoid negative feelings, such as guilt or regret, and to increase positive feelings, such as happiness or pride, even if we are not completely attentive to the process. This contributes to the idea that humans are by nature more drawn to positive emotions and the same phenomena can be seen in change leadership as employees conform more to leaders who validate that aim (Issah 2018).

In case a workplace does not offer the possibility for decisions which generate positive emotions, employees have also been observed to regulate their emotions. What this means is that the employees choose the emotions they express. This regulation often happens due to set norms or expectations in the workplace. The regulation of emotions at work leads to increased stress and decreased job satisfaction. Even though the effects of emotion regulation on job satisfaction were researched to be short-lived, the effects on stress last longer. (Bono et al. 2007).

Bono et al. (2007) researched the employee-supervisor relationship. They referred to a research conducted by Fitness (2000), which stated that unfair treatment by supervisors, which tended to be left unresolved, was researched to bring about feelings of anger in employees. Another example of a similar study was conducted by Miner, Glomb and Hulin [2005], which researched the link between mood and supervisor interactions. It was revealed that 80% of interactions with supervisors were rated positive and 20% as negative by the employees. It was found, however, that the negative

interactions' effects for employee mood were five times greater than the effects of positive interactions. (Bono et al. 2007: 1358).

Bono et al. (2007) also suggest that employees experience less optimism, happiness and enthusiasm when interacting with supervisors than when interacting with coworkers. Their other finding, and perhaps the most relevant one for this study, is that there is a positive connection between supervisors' transformational leadership and employees' experiences of positive emotions throughout their workdays. Transformational leadership is defined as:

“...the process by which a leader fosters group or organizational performance beyond expectation by virtue of the strong emotional attachment with his or her followers combined with the collective commitment to a higher moral cause.” (Díaz-Sáenz 2011: 299”

Bono et al. (2007) state that employees who report to supervisors practicing transformational leadership behaviors, experience more happiness, optimism and enthusiasm throughout the day.

Another example of emotions in interaction situations is emotional contagion. Barsade (2002: 644) defines group emotional contagion as “...the transfer of moods among people in a group”. The significance of contagious emotions for businesses is vast. Understanding the processes behind how emotions are caught is becoming increasingly important as cooperation is gaining more popularity (Barsade 2002: 644). The definition of individual emotional contagion falls under a similar description as mentioned above.

As mentioned above, for a long time, emotions have been considered as hindrances to more important issues. However, when considering an individual's basis as a psychological being, it is only sensible emotions that are considered in leadership. Understanding human psychology is a key point in leading others. It does seem, however, that differing between managing and leading and understanding whether an organization is expecting management or leadership is once again a relevant topic. As stated above, humans are by nature drawn to positive emotions and the workplace should not be considered an exception. It is through emotionally intelligent leadership

that the employees' emotions are considered, more positive experiences offered and thus psychological needs better filled.

2.3 Emotional Intelligence

David Goleman argues that in the working life, one third of the intelligence needed for example in leadership work can be attributed to traditional intelligence (IQ) and the remaining two thirds are connected to emotional intelligence (EI) (Kultanen 2009: 82). Legg and Hutter (2006:8) defined intelligence as measuring "... an agent's ability to achieve goals in a wide range of environments". How does intelligence then connect to emotional intelligence? In the past, reason and emotion have been viewed as opposing concepts (Mayer, Salovey, Caruso and Cherkasskiy 2011: 531). However, as emotional intelligence is "a type of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own and others' emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use the information to guide one's thinking and actions" (Salovey & Mayer 1990:189), it employs similar categories as traditional intelligence listed above. In fact, emotional and traditional intelligences complement each other, forming a concept of intelligence and enabling greater value in a person's work. It is not a matter of either or, but instead utilizing both.

The role of emotional intelligence (also referred to as EI or EQ) has been on the rise for the past few decades, which can be witnessed through the myriad of research conducted on the topic (cf. Bar-On 2006, Gardner 1983, Goleman 1996 and Salovey and Mayer 1993). However, it is not solely individuals' personal lives that the research aims at, it is also the business world. It is no wonder as emotional intelligence is seen as a solution to issues in, for example, the changing working cultures. As Kultanen (2009: 95) points out, a significant portion of the working life is connected to the emotional intelligence skills of managers.

The benefits of utilizing emotional intelligence in leadership are many. Sunindijo, Hadikusumo and Ogunlana (2007: 168) found that project managers with higher EI scores use more open communication and proactive leadership styles. Open communication is integral in successful organizations as through it, it is possible to utilize the best of employees. Proactive leadership is important as handling problems early on

diminishes the disadvantages. It can also be argued that emotions in leadership and organizations is not a new phenomenon. Fambrough and Hart (2008: 745) state that emotions, in fact, have been a source for community building and social control for a long time. So perhaps it is then the term of emotional intelligence that is new, not the topic itself.

It is arguable whether the emotional intelligence skills differ according to the setting in which they are used. Even in the working life, it is humans in the positions of leader and employee, so the same skills of emotional intelligence should apply whether at home or at work. With that in mind, the definitions and discussions on emotional intelligence above seem accurate and deployable. Through this chapter, the baseline of emotional intelligence can be formed, whether the research is aimed at one's personal or professional life.

2.3.1 Theories of emotional intelligence

The concept of emotional intelligence can somewhat be traced to The Bhagavad-Gita 5000 years ago, where the term emotionally stable person resembles the ideas of Mayer and Salovey's emotionally intelligent person and to Plato, who spoke of emotion as the basis of all learning (Dhani and Sharma 2016: 189).

In the modern world, the concept of emotional intelligence is seen to be pioneered by psychologist Reuven Bar-On, who in the 1980's researched the differences between women and men in different cultures of the world. The *term* emotional intelligence can be traced to Peter Salovey and John Mayer in the 1990's. The concept was studied in theoretical articles and was quickly the basis of relevant research (Salovey, Brackett and Mayer 2004: 82). The term and concept were then brought to popularized attention by Daniel Goleman's book *Emotional Intelligence* (1995) (Kultanen 2009: 81). Goleman's theory was rapidly taken in use in both, academic and applied psychology (Kihlstrom and Cantor 2000: 572).

Salovey, Brackett and Mayer (2004: 86) separate three different theories of emotional intelligence. Mayer and Salovey themselves have formed a theory, which defines

emotional intelligence as the ability to perceive and express emotion as well as to absorb, reason with emotion and to regulate emotion in the self and others. The theory has four main areas of skills: perception and expression of emotion, assimilating emotion in thought, understanding and analyzing emotion and reflective regulation of emotion. The second theory is Bar-On's theory, which defines emotional intelligence as "an array of noncognitive capabilities, competencies, and skills that influence one's ability to succeed in coping with environmental demands and pressures". The major areas of this theory are intrapersonal skills (independence, self-regard, etc.), interpersonal skills (empathy, social responsibility, etc.), adaptability scales (problem solving, flexibility, etc.), stress-management scales (stress tolerance, impulse control) and general mood. The third and final of the mentioned theories is Daniel Goleman's theory of EI, which regards emotional intelligence as abilities such as self-control, zeal and persistence as well as the ability to motivate oneself. He also states that character is the word that is used for the phenomena instead of emotional intelligence skills. Goleman's theory of EI is divided into five main areas: knowing one's emotions, managing emotions, motivating oneself, recognizing emotions in others and handling relationships.

Goleman delves into the relevance of emotional intelligence in today's world (1998: 9). There seems to be a relation between the reasons behind the growing significance of emotional intelligence, as eventually everything connects to the continuously changing and globalizing world. As change is a constant in the world, understanding and matching new innovations and global competition requires emotional intelligence as does self-management in the continuously downsizing and more visible organizations. Globalizing workforce as well as changing businesses demand understanding oneself and others. Goleman also states that emotional competences have been found to be twice as important in excellence as pure intellect (IQ) and expertise (Goleman 1998: 31).

All the theories presented above tiptoe around the same topic but take on different viewpoints. Mayer and Salovey place a basis for emotional intelligence which gives a definition for the topic without excluding anything other theorists bring forth. However, the categories they define seem to emphasize one's personal skills and leave social

abilities to lesser focus. Bar-On, on the other hand, gives more emphasis to social skills than personal abilities in his theory. Goleman, however, considers both the personal and social abilities in his theory, distinctly dividing emotional intelligence into separate subcategories and defining the themes each category withholds. He goes into detail describing the contents of each category, which forms a base for understanding emotional intelligence and applying the theme to leadership and thus offering a suitable and functioning base for the purpose of this thesis as well. As his theory balances between the personal and social dimensions, it offers more leeway in researching, for example, the business world through empirical analysis.

2.3.2 Goleman's theory of EI

David Goleman's theory of emotional intelligence divides the concept into personal and social abilities (1999: 42-43) (Figure 2). The personal abilities entail self-awareness ("knowing one's internal states, preferences, resources and intuitions"), self-regulation ("managing one's internal states, impulses and resources") and motivation ("emotional tendencies that guide or facilitate reaching goals") whereas the social abilities entail empathy ("awareness of others' feelings, needs and concerns") as well as social skills (adeptness at inducing desirable responses in others"). Kultanen (2009: 90) defined the difference between personal and social abilities in Goleman's theory as personal abilities being those that measure how well an individual gets on with oneself and the social as how well she gets on with others.

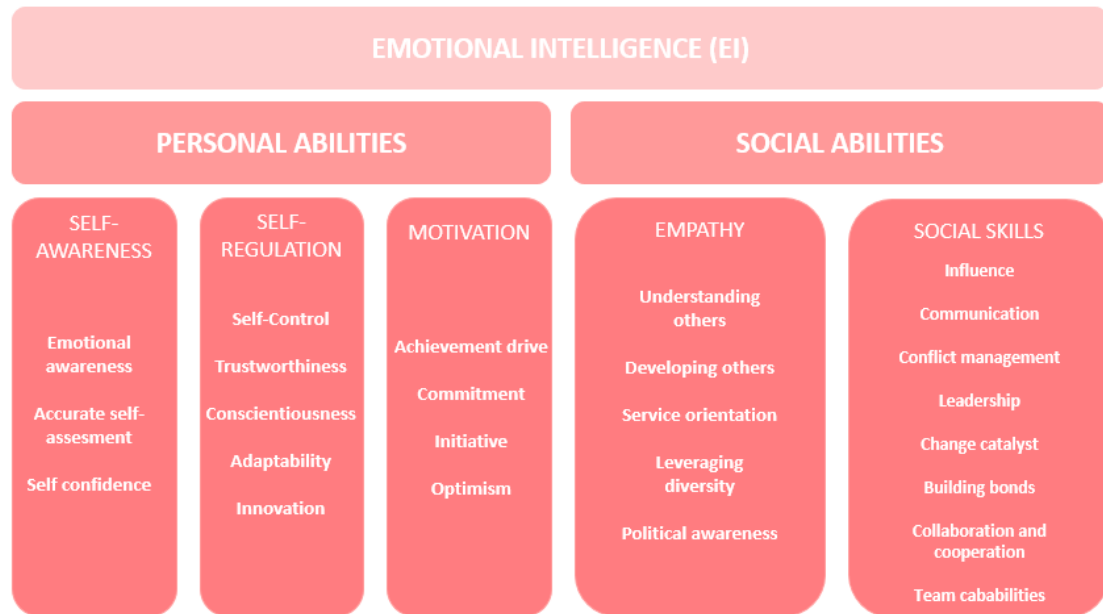


Figure 2. Emotional Intelligence according to Daniel Goleman (1998: 26-27).

Goleman connects his ideas with leadership especially in *Working with Emotional Intelligence* (1999 (first edition 1998)), which was published after his first book on the topic (*Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ*, 1995). Due to public interest in a chapter focusing on the working life in Goleman's first book on Emotional Intelligence, Goleman begun studying emotional intelligence with a focus on the issue (Goleman 1999: 16-17). The argument is that the same concepts of emotional intelligence can be utilized in the working life and leadership.

Kultanen (2009: 90) differentiates between Goleman's five categories of EI and connects them to leadership. He discusses that, for example, the role of self-awareness in a supervisor's position is in understanding the consequences of her feelings and thoughts. As stated above, being attentive to employees' emotions helps for example in the process of change. From another point of view, Kultanen (2009:90) states that if a supervisor does not like their employee, it reflects as negative phenomena when interacting with them as the results of negative thoughts are rarely positive. He also points out that even though individuals have a variety of emotions in use, the positive ones seem to lead to better results than negative thinking and emotions. However, the lengths to which individuals can influence their own thoughts and emotions is another topic.

The role of self-regulation can be seen through, for example, prioritizing the supervisor's tasks as they are often over-engaged with work (Kultanen 2009:90). What is perhaps the most visible expression of self-regulation in leadership is self-discipline. It is seen especially through the ability to strategize one's emotions so that they are brought out in a productive manner at a productive time. So, for instance, disappointment towards an employee is hardly best brought out through anger or frustration, but instead through conversation.

The third category, motivation, Kultanen (2009:91) says to have an integral role in a manager's position. The influence is substantial, both internally as well as externally as motivation is needed for the manager to be effective at her job as well as to motivate employees to perform. Motivation seems probably least connected to the other categories of emotional intelligence. However, it does serve an important point in an organization's productivity. Kultanen (2009:91) states that supervisors with poor motivation reflect their own world to the organization and thus with verbal and nonverbal communication weakens the organization's productivity. Motivation can also be connected to rewarding systems (also known as bonus systems) utilized in companies. The idea of a bonus brings team members together, working for mutual goals and as the targets are achieved, the benefits concern the employees as well as the organization (Levin 2012:42).

Empathy is seen as a relevant trait in supervisors by Kultanen (2009:91) for three reasons:

1. Through empathy, a supervisor can lead skillfully and on a personal level in different situations.
2. Empathy will help in understanding the differences in people.
3. With empathy, a supervisor can build trust within a group.

Kultanen (2009:91) states, however, that measuring empathy is difficult as it is highly subjective and abstract. A supervisor might see their level of empathy as higher than their employees do. This difference in views can lead to conflicts and to the employees experiencing a lack in their meaning. However, there is such a thing as too much empathy as Kultanen (2009:91) also mentions how excessive empathy is not considered good as it can be considered micromanaging.

The last category of Goleman's EI theory, social skills, is growing in significance from the point of view of success. The significance of social skills in a manager's role can be attributed to, firstly, that managers with good social skills rarely need to use hard management and so get the same results with a better atmosphere. Secondly, that resolving conflicts is more effortless. And third, and perhaps the most important point for this thesis, that in leading change, social skills have a notable role. (Kultanen 2009: 91.) As mentioned above in section 2.1, one of the key points in leading change is communication and thus social skills.

Regardless of its status, Goleman's theory has received criticism as well. Goleman's statement that success is greatly attributable to emotional intelligence is not necessarily so straightforwardly true. Salovey, Brackett and Mayer (2004: 90) state that if there were one psychological unity that could define success, it would exceed any findings in a century's research in applied psychology.

To conclude, emotional intelligence in the business world is a topic continuously under more research. As this thesis argues that emotional intelligence is integral in leading effective organizations, especially ones going through a change, and that the disruptions in emotional intelligence in leadership are connected to the lack of motivation and overall unsatisfaction in one's work, emotional intelligence responds to a need in effective leadership. It is good to note that emotions are not necessarily new in leadership, it is simply the term, emotional intelligence, with which it's referred to that has changed. It is also important to note that regardless of the difference in work and personal lives' settings, it is still humans doing the work whether as an employee or leader. This means that the same skills of emotional intelligence should apply. Those skills are rather similar in content regardless of the theory being studied, but they do have differences in categories and literal definitions.

It can be argued that in leadership and emotional intelligence, the role of communication is significant. As Fiehler (2002: 79) points out, emotions are continuously present in communication. Emotional intelligence is visible in communication mostly through social skills, which entail communication. Planalp and Knie (2002: 56) argue that the reasons behind human communication is to express ourselves, to understand ourselves and to accomplish other goals. The reasons appear

alike to concepts of emotional intelligence, for example there is similarity in emotional intelligence's social skills and how emotions are expressed in communication. Understanding ourselves and accomplishing other goals also closely resemble Goleman's theory of personal and social abilities of EI mentioned above.

3 Methodology

As discussed above in section 2.2, emotions have been a history of being considered hindrances in the working life. However, as in the business world, the only constant is change (Washington and Hacker 2005: 400), it brings with it challenges that requires social and emotional skills as well. It is thus relevant to study the impacts the changes have on organizations as well as the most effective and humane ways it can be implemented. This study aims to elevate discussion on emotions in leadership on and to challenge the traditional idea of leading with only reason.

In a more detailed level, this is a qualitative case study, which focuses on how emotional intelligence is perceived and used by people in leadership positions as well as the relevance employees in an organization see in emotions in leadership. As stated earlier in the theory chapters, there is a semantic difference between the words manage and lead. This study concentrates on the differences between the two concepts in business and suggests that emotional intelligence has a considerable role in the satisfaction of an organization's employees. Even though the topic of leadership is continuously researched, there's still much to do especially in practice.

It is also worth mentioning that my personal experiences with the company are relevant in this study. Prior to the study, I had worked with the company for three years, so the people interviewed, and the situations described were not fully viewed from the outside.

3.1 Research questions

This research was conducted as an intensive case study and the main purpose of it was to offer interpretations on the case as well as the employees and leaders involved. The purpose is to analyze the case and to focus on the experiences of the people being studied (Eriksson and Kovalainen 2008).

This case study was used to gain more knowledge on how the IT organization utilizes emotional intelligence in its leadership. The study aims to contribute to a larger societal discussion on the role of emotions and especially their role in leadership. It also aims to

bring difficulties faced with the current working life to a new light. Through this study, themes of valuing emotional intelligence, internal communication, empathy and social skills gain significant roles. And in the end, the thesis offers ideas and justifications for how to utilize themes of emotional intelligence in leadership.

The research questions in this study are “What kinds of thoughts do themes of emotional intelligence bring up in the managers of the organization?” and “What kind of relevance do the employees see in using emotions in the leadership of the organization?”.

3.2 Case study

The case study in this thesis focused on a Finnish construction company's IT-organization, which was going through a change project at the time of the study. The study was conducted as a questionnaire and interview study. Through the questionnaire answers provided by the employees in the company, a basis of the current situation was formed. The base included perspectives on how the management is seen to use emotions in their leadership and how successful the organization's internal communication is considered. After the base of the current situation was formed, different levels of the management were interviewed using the questionnaire answers as well as Goleman's theory on emotional intelligence to form questions to the semi-structured interviews.

3.2.1 Case company: YIT

The case company for this study was YIT PLC (Yleinen Insinööritoimisto Oyj), later only YIT, which is a Finnish construction company with business in building business premises, residential areas and infrastructure. The company was founded in 1912 and in 2018 had a business revenue of 3 012 million euros (YITgroup 30.10.2019). It has business in 11 countries in the Baltics, Russia and Scandinavia. Most notable projects for the company have been Tripla, a hotel, apartment and mall complex in Pasila, Helsinki and the Tampere tramroad alliance.

The company utilizes a rewarding system called Management by Key Results. The system functions on an annual cycle, where the objectives are set on a yearly basis and they are based on the company's strategy. The system also entails a bonus, which is based on the achieved objectives on a score from 1 to 5. The company's rewarding system is utilized simultaneously, both, in operational work as well as project-related work.

3.2.2 Case organization: YIT IT

The IT organization employs approximately a hundred persons in seven countries. Prior to the case project, the organization had handled most of the direct IT-relations with vendors. After the project, the employees would act as specialists in their areas, but leave the operational work to outside vendors.

The hierarchy of the organization is four leveled: CIO, top management, mid management and employees. The organization is structured based on service areas and not all of the managers have employees to lead. For this study, however, only those managers who do have employees to lead were interviewed.

The organization utilizes monthly infos, weekly project infos for the organization as well as separate core project ones, team meetings and one to one -meetings as internal communication.

3.2.2.1 Status of the organization

In 2017 it was announced that YIT and Lemminkäinen PLC would be merging together and eventually did so on the 1st of February 2018. In the business side of the company, the merge moved on quicker than in the support functions. This meant that in organizations such as IT, the changes came along much slower. Due to the merge, the company was left with duplicate systems, applications and ways of working. It was apparent that there was a need for a project to unify said systems and ways of working. These systems and ways of working needed were unified through a project named the IT transition project.

During the fall of 2018, the IT management was preparing a high-level plan for the transition. It became clear that the project's aim was not simply to choose which applications would remain and which would be discontinued, but also to decide which vendors would be chosen to deliver the services in the new model. This meant negotiations on new contracts, timetables and products. In the early Spring of 2019, the project was launched, and the initial throw-over date was to be the 4th of June. However, as the scope of the project was rather large and the timetable too tight, the date was moved to the 3rd of September 2019. In addition to new services and service model, the IT personnel was trained for the new way of working.

After September 2019, new ways of working would move more and more to operational mode where the traditional support roles of IT were moved to an outside vendor causing a considerable change in the ways of working. Regardless, the project still had areas that had work to do and the project would continue until all needed issues would be resolved, approximately until March 2020.

To help manage the change, workshops were held with the help of an external partner for the supervisors and management. The partner used Prosci's ADKAR model to explain the change and help manage it. The model divides the elements of a change process into five phases: awareness, desire, knowledge, ability and reinforcement. The awareness phase emphasizes an individual's need to be aware of what is changing and why. Desire commits the individual to the process and to understand its benefits. The knowledge-phase accentuates the needed information on how to act in the new situation. Ability focuses on the needed abilities to act in the new situation. In the reinforcement-stage the new way of being becomes the norm.

The project was planned and executed through PI (Program Increment) planning, which is a face-to-face event held every ten weeks. The planning is a part of Scaled Agile Framework (SAFe), which offers help in making businesses more agile (Scaled Agile 2020). In the event, the key people in the project plan the coming ten weeks on a task-level. This is used to help understand the overall status of the project as well as to clarify the statuses of the different functions in the project.

It is also worth mentioning that during the project in question, another companywide project begun. However, the material for this study was collected prior to the new project and therefore does not significantly impact this study.

Even though the project organization was going through a change, the main focus of the study became the overall leadership of the company, project and operational kinds.

3.3 Data collection

3.3.1 Questionnaire research

The material for this case study was collected through a questionnaire as well as through interviews. The objective of the questionnaire was to collect information from the employees on the current experiences on changes and their leadership. However, as the study was conducted as an ordered case study, only the questions relevant for the angle of this thesis will be discussed here.

The questionnaire was sent to every employee in the organization via email in the May of 2019 and was given two weeks to answer. Microsoft Forms was used to create the questionnaire as it is an official tool in the company. The questionnaire was anonymous due to the sensitivity of the topic and the anonymity was hoped to lower the threshold of answering the questionnaire. The scope of the questionnaire was approximately² 100 people, and was aimed at the employees, excluding team managers (mid management) and the IT management (top management). It was sent to everyone as it would have been difficult to separate the recipients based on status or country of employment. The questionnaire was created in Finnish and translated to English as the organization is multinational and has operations in seven countries. The questionnaire in Finnish had 25 respondents and in English, 2. However, as it became apparent during the study that nearly all the answers in the questionnaire as well as the interviews discussed the state

² The exact number of respondents on an email mailing list on a particular time cannot be collected after sending it, due to possible changes on the personnel of the organization.

of leadership in Finland and all the interviewees were from the Finnish organization, the focus of this thesis shifted only to the Finnish organization.

The number of recipients for only the Finnish questionnaire was approximately³ 80 employees. Based on those numbers, the response percentage was 31,3%. The number of respondents provided a credible reference of the views of the employees in the organization. On a broader level, the responses gave credible direction of the entire organization's situation and the open questions in the questionnaire offer more material for a qualitative analysis. As the thesis focuses on experiences of the employees and managers, the respondents of the questionnaire most likely had opinions on the topics, which enriches the material base of the study in comparison to the employees who did not respond and thus did not show interest in participating or discussing the topics. However, as there is no evidence of the experiences, thoughts and ideas of the employees who did not respond, the similarity of thoughts between the respondents and the rest of the employees cannot be guaranteed.

The questions were divided into overall experiences with the on-going project (its challenges, successes, internal communication etc.), emotional intelligence in the organization's leadership and basic information. The overall aim of the questions was to chart the current feelings, thoughts and experiences of the employees. The aim of the emotional intelligence section was to gain more information on how the organization feels about the use of emotional intelligence in their leadership, both their direct supervisors as well as the management. This was perhaps the most fruitful part of the questionnaire with regards to the interviews. The last part, the basic information, was used to form a profile of the respondents. The questionnaire's question types can be divided into two: open and structured questions. The average answering time for the questionnaire was 32 minutes and 8 seconds.

The questions of the questionnaire can be found in appendices 8.1 and 8.2.

³ The exact number of respondents on an email mailing list on a particular time cannot be collected after sending it, due to possible changes on the personnel of the organization.

3.3.2 Interview research

The interviews took place during June, July and August of 2019 and included eight managers (three top level managers and five mid-level managers). The number of interviewees was appropriate as an important aim was to gather people from different parts of the organization. One of the interviewees was interviewed further later on in the process due to the original interview tape cutting out a necessary part of the interview. The interviews lasted for about an hour per interview, and all of them included a fifteen-minute presentation on the research and topics that would be discussed. This was to orient the interviewees into the topic at hand. The interviews were recorded and transcribed to ease their closer inspection. All the interviews were conducted in Finnish.

The interviews were semi-structured, which left room for open discussion and spontaneous questions. This was a fruitful way to gather the material as the discussion lived in the moment. Due to the topic being close to the interviewees as well as a controversial topic, it seemed as though special attention should be paid to how the questions were asked and the topics discussed. The theme could easily have felt like an attack, which then could have left the interviewees unwilling to discuss the topics openly. That is why, for example, the interview questions were based on the answers from the questionnaire as an additional source of information. The topics of the interview questions were divided into five categories (self-awareness, self-management, motivation, empathy and social skills) according to Goleman's five categories of emotional intelligence. The question frame can be found from Appendix 2.

3.3.3 Combining the questionnaire and interview

The described twofold method of research gave this study the possibility to understand in a concise manner the experiences, emotions and thoughts of individuals from different parts of the organization. As management and employee tasks differ in practice, this juxtaposition was an important one to study.

The questions in the questionnaire were formed with the employee experiences in mind and with the aim of gathering an overall picture of the current situation. The interviews

gave the interviewees the possibility to respond and react with their own thoughts and experiences. The employees' opinions were collected through an anonymous questionnaire due to the sensitivity of the topic as well as to be able to gather a larger number of responses. The managers were interviewed, and their answers analyzed anonymously, as it was their work that was being studied. This positioning was chosen due to efficiency as well as fairness.

This method of research worked as was originally planned. It could be utilized in future study of this kind, where the juxtaposition and differences of opinion between two parts of an organization, institution or other social group are investigated. The method works as a mediator where different sides to a problem need to be studied and considered rather than as a quest for one truth.

3.4 Self-reported study

As the themes in this qualitative study were about experiences and feelings, it is also important to discuss the nature of self-reported studies and how it connects to this research. As Paulhus and Vazire (2007: 224) say, asking directly for the experiences of the research subjects is the commonsense logic of the self-reported study. This method is the basis of this study as it focuses on how the subjects themselves view and express their behavior. To be precise, this study utilizes a self-reported study based on direct self-ratings, which means that the interviewees are directly asked about their own personalities and experiences.

For this study, it was essential to gather the personal, self-reported experiences of the people, employees who answered the questionnaire and managers that were interviewed, involved. This means asking, for example, "how do you experience a changing work culture?" or "how do you feel about being a leader?". For this study it was important to form an impression of the experiences of the organization's individuals therefore self-reporting was in the center of the study.

3.5 Analysis of data

The data collected in this study was analyzed, first, through thematic analysis by going through the material for relevant and interesting topics, issues or experiences and then grouping and analyzing at them with the help of Daniel Goleman's five categories of emotional intelligence (self-awareness, self-management, motivation, empathy and social skills). Through this kind of analysis, the research is open for findings outside of the original research questions as well.

First, the data received from the questionnaire is opened in chapter 4 Analysis. It gives a background for the experiences, feelings and thoughts at the time of the case study. From this, the answers received through the interviews are put into a context. The interview answers are then categorized according to the categories of emotional intelligence.

4 Analysis

This chapter will first look at the statistics and answers from the questionnaire, which was sent to the employees of the IT-organization, while analyzing their wider meaning. Then this chapter will discuss how the middle and top management responded to questions on emotional intelligence.

The analysis of the questionnaire answers aims to provide an idea of how the employees experience the organization's management, whether emotions are present in management and how communication works internally. It also discusses what the employees feel their emotions relevance is to their supervisors and whether they feel they are appreciated and meaningful to the organization. This section aims to answer the second research question: "What kind of relevance do the employees see in using emotions in the leadership of the organization?"

The analysis of the interviewee's answers focuses on producing information on what role themes of emotional intelligence have in the organization's leadership from the point of view of the management. This section aims to answer the first research question: "What kinds of thoughts do themes of emotional intelligence bring up in the managers of the organization?"

4.1 Questionnaire answers

The questionnaire was sent to the IT-organization's employees (approximately 100 people from seven countries) and it was answered by 27 people in total, 25 people answered the Finnish language questionnaire and 2 people the English one. However, as stated above in section 3.3.1, the answers to the English questionnaire will not be considered in this analysis due to the focus of the study becoming more precise during the study.

The questionnaire's answers suggest that the employees want to see emotions in the management and their communication as well as feel that emotions would produce more meaning, motivation and togetherness. The mid management can be considered closer to the employees through the supervisors being more attentive to the employees'

emotions and communicating their own than the top management. However, there seems to be a common idea that there is a correct way to express emotions, which has similar characteristics as Goleman's theory's self-restriction.

Perhaps one of the best questions to paint a general picture of the current state of the organization was how successful the respondents see the leadership of change projects in the company in general (figure 3). The answers are rather even as 40% felt that it is somewhat successful, 32% felt it was somewhat unsuccessful and 28% were neutral. There is a clear division amongst the respondents, which could be due to differences in their managers' leadership.

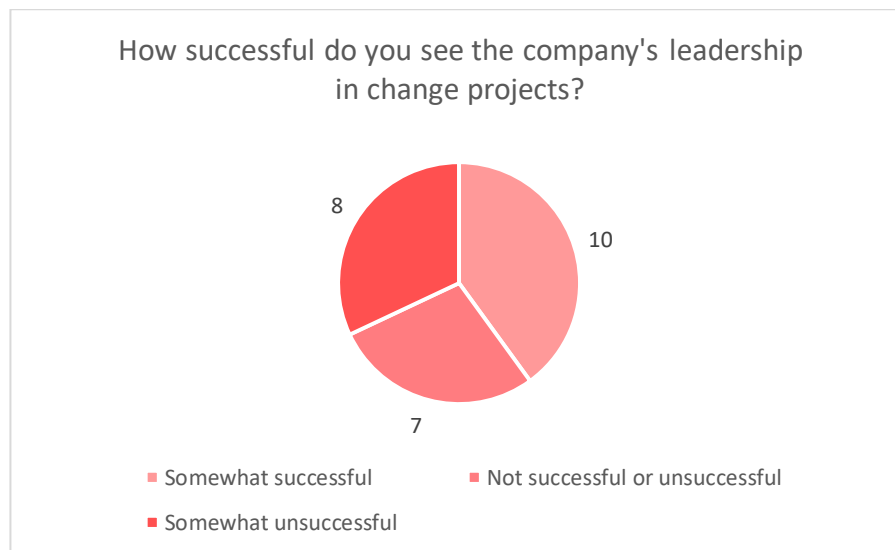


Figure 3: How the respondents to the Finnish questionnaire view the company's change leadership.

Through the answers, a difference between how the mid and top management levels were seen to deal with emotions became apparent (figure 4). The employees felt that their own supervisors (mid management) somewhat pay attention to the employee's emotions (56% yes, 26% no and 20% I don't know). However, the numbers for the top management level were considerably lower at 28% yes, 36% no and 36% I don't know. This can perhaps be due to either the hierarchy of the organization or the types of people in the top and middle management levels. Perhaps emotional intelligence decreases higher on in the organization and thus the employees do not seem to feel it from the top management, or the organization hierarchy is too strict and so the emotions do not flow all the way to the employees.

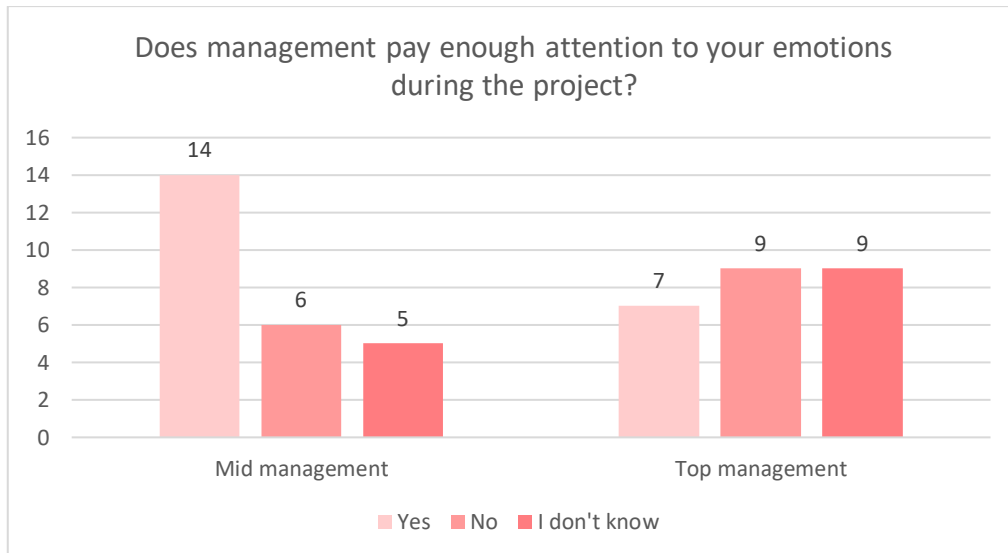


Figure 4: Responses to management paying attention to employees' emotions.

However, the hierarchy in the organization shares opinions. The answers are rather divided, which could indicate that perhaps the employees do not themselves connect the issues they feel with hierarchy, but instead see them as their own separate issues or that the experiences differ in different sides of the organization, depending on who the employee's supervisor is.

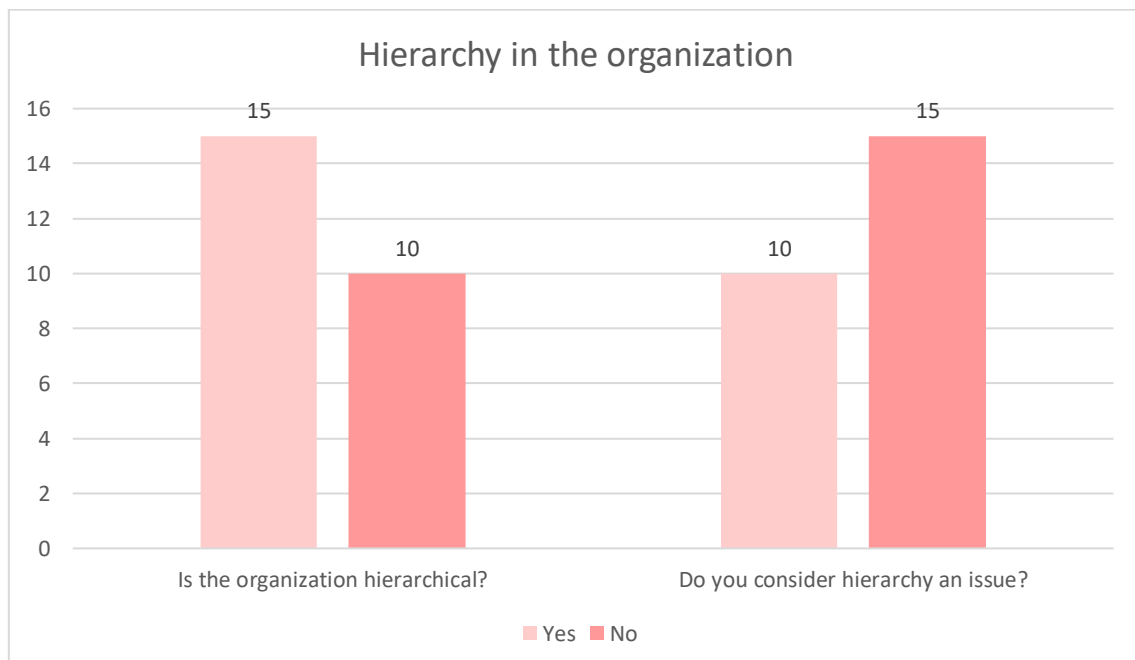


Figure 5: Responses to hierarchy in the organization.

When asked whether the employees feel the management uses emotions in their communication (figure 6), 24% felt that emotions are used in communication and 76%

answered that they are not. However, this question does not comment whether there are differences in the expressions of emotions between the top and middle management levels.

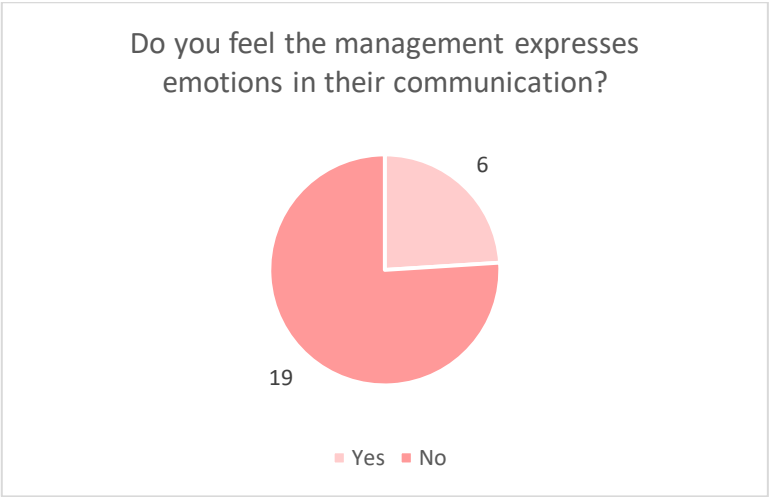


Figure 6: Respondents to emotions in communication.

However, it should be noted that 84% of the respondents want to see emotions in the management’s communication (figure 7). One open answer shed light on how the communication in the organization is currently mostly fact based and condensed and another stated that things are said directly and without circling around the topic. The types of emotions the employees want to see and how they prefer them to be expressed is not apparent in the responses even though it would be beneficial for the research.



Figure 7: Respondent to whether emotions are wanted in communication.

Although emotions are not always visibly used by the managers, the employees wish that they would be a bigger part of leadership and communication. The open answers to a question on why the employees wish to see emotions can be thematized and grouped into four categories: motivation, respect, peer support and authenticity. All the categories focus on what the significance of emotions is for their work. *Motivation* is seen as an integral part of emotions in leadership. The answers signal the desire for humane management that cares about their employees and shows it as well.

“When the management puts more into the game, it motivates the entire organization”

“[emotions in leadership] give a better picture and perhaps motivates towards a common goal more”

“... it motivates to do. I don’t want to work for a robot, but for a human. This interaction involves showing emotions as a part of communication. How else do we create culture?”

The employees see the management showing emotions as motivating for the organization. Perhaps this speaks of a spirit of “together we can do it”, where the employees are a part of the group, sharing emotions and working together with the management towards common goals.

The answers also considered *respect* as a significant benefit of using emotions in leadership and communication. Emotions are seen as a part of the working world and as contributors to making someone appear more human. They are considered to help understand and accept others as well as to contribute to feeling respected at work:

“It could bring out more the feeling that we mean something”

“I would authentically feel like every human is respected as a person”

The answers emphasized feeling that the employees have a meaning, to which empathy and understanding contribute considerably in addition to the management expressing emotions. Therefore, it is not necessarily simply the lack of expressing emotions that is the issue, but the lack of expressing empathy, for example.

Peer support is a theme that was brought out, but not by a majority. Peer support means that through expressing emotions, it is easier for people to share their experiences and to connect. That is the basis of emotions sharing, connecting with others whether through basic positive or negative emotions.

“It’s good to hear other people’s vibes as well”

There was one rule regarding emotions that was occurring in the answers. The emotions that are shown in leadership and communication need to be *authentic* and not “glued on”. It was stated that inauthentic emotions feel fake and can be called out.

“No emotions if they are glued on, people can tell instantly”

The answers also emphasize that there is a correct way of expressing emotions and if brought out “correctly” they can be channeled even to fact-based communication so that the topic can be more easily absorbed. According to one answer, at work “a certain emotion control and restriction is in order”, however emotions are still said to be a part of everyone’s self-image. It would appear then that emotions are welcome at work, but they need to be expressed in a certain way. None of the answers discuss what that certain way is. Perhaps it is then the social norms that dictate how and which emotions can be expressed, for example shouting or laughing too loud could be considered expressions of emotions that are not appropriate for the workplace.

Regardless of the majority wishing that emotions would be shown by the management, a few answers stated that work is not where emotions should be shown. One answer said that emotions are not needed at work if everything is clear. Another answer stated that usually at work, emotions can be “frozen” possibly meaning either that they do not feel emotions should be expressed at work or that they do not see the management expressing their emotions freely. This can be due to many things that may not have anything to do with the working life. The way people have been raised, the culture they are in or personal beliefs can all influence the way emotions are viewed and expressed at work.

Another indicator of the difference between how the top and middle management levels are seen to express and take into consideration emotions is in internal communication. It seems that the internal communication in the organization and

especially the project, reflects the idea that the mid-management is closer to the employees than the rest of the organization. According to the numbers (figure 8), 64% of the respondents of the Finnish questionnaire felt that the communication from the mid management is successful, 16% felt it was unsuccessful and 20% were neutral. Whereas 42% felt that the communication from the top management is successful, 20% felt it was unsuccessful and 36% were neutral. This could be another indicator of the hierarchy in the organization and the idea of having information flow from the top management through the mid management and finally to the employees.

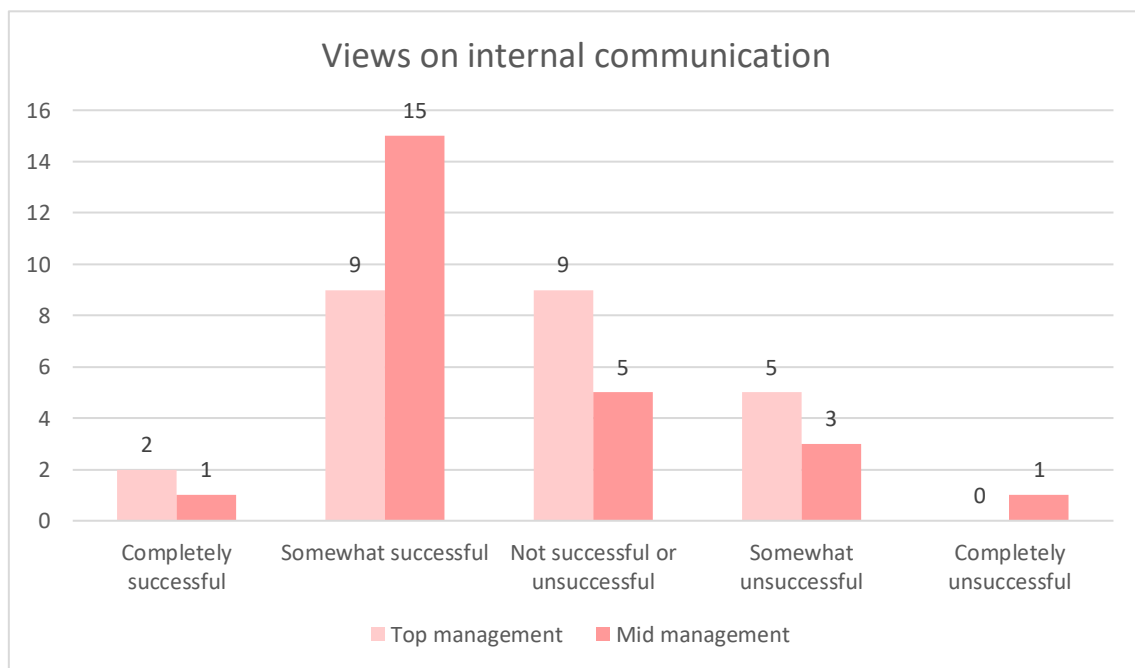


Figure 8: How the respondents to the Finnish questionnaire answered a question on the successfulness of internal communication in the project.

It is difficult to differentiate which of these experiences and thoughts are specific only for the project and which ones are a part of a bigger issue, outside the project lines. However, when asked whether the employees have noticed changes in the ways their managers lead, most of the answers were either left blank or it was said that there is no difference. In only four answers the employees pondered if the communication had become more visible.

To conclude, the questionnaire formed a basis for the current status of the organization's leadership. The employees feel there is a gap between how the top and middle managements show and communicate emotions. It would seem it is due to

either hierarchy in that the top management is too far away from the employees or because of lack of emotional intelligence in the leadership. Based on the answers, four categories could be formed on what the employees see the relevance of emotions is. Motivation, respect, peer support and authenticity all play a significant role in the relevance of emotions. The employees see that management showing emotions would motivate them to perform better, perhaps due to a feeling of togetherness that emotions can produce. They also see that it would make them feel more respected and sharing emotions would offer greater peer support. However, the employees also stated that they want to see authentic emotions and that inauthentic ones can instantly be called out. Regardless of the current situation, the answers also shed light on how the employees wish that the management showed more emotions.

4.2 Interviewing the management

As the questionnaire formed an overall picture of what the leadership appears to be in the organization, the interviews aimed to then go deeper into the reasons why the leadership is considered the way it is. The interview questions were based on the questionnaire answers collected before as well as Goleman's five EI categories (Self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social skills). A total of eight managers (three top level and five mid-level managers) were interviewed. This section aims to provide answers to how the managers themselves view emotional intelligence and leadership. The topics collected in the interviews will be thematized and analyzed with the help of Goleman's theory.

4.2.1 Self-awareness

As stated in the theory-section of this study, self-awareness is formed from consciousness to one's self. Goleman separated self-awareness to emotional awareness, accurate self-assessment and self-confidence. In this section, the answers from the interviews will be analyzed and interpreted according to the above subcategories.

Self-awareness is possibly difficult to grasp as it is. It is true it holds within it the concept of self-confidence, but it is not the only theme of self-awareness. When the interviewees

were asked questions about self-awareness, clarifying questions, such as “why do I act this way?”, “how do I act?” and “what do I feel and think?” were additionally asked. Even still, the answers were closely related to “how do I feel about myself?”. For example, having good self-confidence was considered better for the supervisor as well, as it means that the employee is confident enough to make decisions without consulting the supervisor constantly.

The role of self-awareness was connected to success. It was considered an enabler in understanding an employee’s role in the organization as well as the impact of employees’ actions to others’ success. A significant role was attributed to a self-aware organization, where everyone contributes to others’ success. From the point of view of managers, self-awareness functions on a larger scale as it is not only one’s own position and impact that needs to be thought of, but also the ones being led. The ability to “think ahead” is emphasized when in a management role.

The lack of self-awareness in a work environment was considered a hindrance. It was seen that if the employee does not have a realistic image of what they are doing and how that affects others, it can create difficulty not only in their work performance, but also in the environment.

Many of the answers focused on how self-awareness is seen through performing tasks, taking in responsibilities and succeeding. None of the answers concentrated on how self-awareness is actually an internal process, which is based in one’s core and is not only a work-related ability.

4.2.2 Self-regulation

According to Goleman’s theory, self-regulation is divided into self-control, trustworthiness, conscientiousness, adaptability and innovation. In the interviews, only self-control rose up in connection to self-regulation. Also, topics on the division of positive and negative emotions, the correct way of expressing emotions and what is the role of emotions rising from personal lives came up in the interviews.

When discussing self-regulation in the interviews, it was found that there seems to be a difference between the expectations on how employees, mid management and top management should utilize self-regulation. The employees are considered to bring out emotions freely and to express their thoughts, even the negative ones. This is celebrated by the mid management and considered as a healthy expression of emotions. However, one mid-level manager also said that perhaps sometimes the negative emotions that are shared may be too much.

“...if someone behaves really badly, it’s being tolerated for quite a long time.” (Mid management interviewee)

Dealing with the negative emotions of employees is mostly difficult for the top management. In some interviews, the need to control and divide emotions to good and bad was discussed. One mid-level manager said that they are annoyed that often in the organization, management comes before leadership. Things are managed without considering the individual. These ideas contribute to the analysis of the questionnaire responses. Through the questionnaire, the answers formed an image of a distant top management, while the mid-level managers were closer to the employees and thus creating a feel of an “us vs. them” attitude.

A similar theme of correct emotions at work that was discussed in the questionnaire answers also came up in the interviews. Expressing positive emotions through laughter, for example, is welcome as it is contagious and rises positive emotions in others. However, when negative emotions are brought to work, through expressing rage, for example, it is also contagious and not necessarily desirable as they can be considered hindrances to the work.

“So maybe it’s that way that positive emotions are wanted more there but are they always natural and will everyone go with them, it’s difficult to say. But good manners in behavior and rules, are they learned at home every time? Maybe not.” (Top management interviewee)

“If there’s a negative emotion that rises from outside the workplace that you’ve had a bad weekend for example and you bring it here, that’s fine that it can show, but it can begin influencing your work in a different way than is hoped, cause sometimes

the work task can make you emotional, but it's good that it's expressed." (Top management interviewee)

It was mostly understood that humans are a package of negative and positive emotions and some stated that they would rather see only the positive ones at work. One interviewee said that negative emotions are expressed when something is "very wrong", at a time of crisis. They also stated that Finland seems to have an attitude of not having too much fun, either. However, expressing emotions was also celebrated as it makes people interesting.

Many of the mid-level managers discussed how it is the supervisors' job to understand the changes in people's personal lives as well. One manager had empathized through an employee's rough times, co-living through pain that the employee was going through in their personal life. They said they adjusted the employee's work tasks and working time and agreed on a momentary different working rhythm. It seems as if the mid-level managers care for the wellbeing of their employees over maximizing the company's current efficiency.

Sharing negative emotions at work was also seen as something that brings people together in difficult times. Making fun of topics that are considered as faults in the work organization can be freeing and offer peer support.

"If something's wrong, people start joking about it... it kind of creates team spirit when you get to show those emotions." (Mid management interviewee)

In the questionnaire, 72% of employees stated they feel they can express their emotions freely at work, 20% said they cannot and 8% said they did not know. However, when interviewed, it was the top managers, who seem to restrict themselves from expressing their emotions freely. One mid-management interviewee brought out the theme of home and work personas. The work persona is based on the need to act a certain way when in a managerial position. This persona entails less emotion and more of what is dubbed as acting professionally. The interviewee also stated that it is something that comes naturally and is learned through upbringing. Another stated that there does not need to be a difference on how emotions are expressed at work or at home and emphasizes that there is a natural social pressure based on the status to be correct. One

interviewee pondered how perhaps the management have work identities in which they hide emotions away and brand themselves the way they want.

“... and some people have probably calculated what they don’t want to say about their personal lives...” (Mid management interviewee)

Perhaps the management’s need for a work persona as well as the conservative views on others expressing their emotions comes from the difficulty in expressing one’s own feelings. It can be a culturally or socially bound construct, where emotions and reason are still seen as a juxtaposition, where reason is more important.

“... it’s maybe more internally built ... it would require it being more a part of this whole environment. Someone else should lead the way first, before I could get there.” (Top management interviewee)

However, it was also explained that certain decisions need to also be made with emotion. They added that with them, decisions need to have a rational base as well. The interviewee also stated that emotions need to be a part of working life and that giving space for emotions in decision making usually brings out something better. They state that it is important to pay attention to how emotions are expressed.

“So how you utilize emotional intelligence and control [emotions] and ... also interpret others that is this a good place to explode or show emotions in any way.” (Top management interviewee)

The interviewees have differing ideas of the importance of considering their employee’s emotions. Some state that it is important to consider people’s personal lives and their possible impacts to their work while others state that it is not always easy to acknowledge the feelings. What is worth noting is that most of the supervisors who replied that it is easy to take note of their employee’s feelings and to make actions based on them, were mid-level managers, which means that people higher up in the organization found it more difficult to understand and to act based on their employees emotions.

Perhaps one of the reasons is that as the employee-manager relationship deepens, it gets easier to recognize the moods and dominant emotions from small indicators. This could mean that people on the top management-level are more inclined to keep an

emotional distance to their employees. One mid manager interviewee stated that the management is distant from the rest of the organization.

“... the management is a bit scentless and tasteless. They don’t really hang with us. They aren’t shown with us, they don’t talk to us, they don’t interact with us.” (Mid management interviewee)

Another mid management interviewee also commented how the management feels to be afar and communicating emotions to their supervisors is difficult. The difficulty comes from sensing how emotions are difficult to receive by the management and then feeling uneasy communicating emotions. This can be considered empathy, but more on that further.

“I, on the other hand, sense that for example the people above me are not terribly receptive of these things and that’s probably why I don’t show them then.” (Mid management interviewee)

4.2.3 Motivation

In Goleman’s theory, motivation is the third of personal abilities. Goleman divided motivation into achievement drive, commitment, initiative and optimism. In the case company, a reward system introduced in section 3.2.1, called MBKR (Management by Key Results) is used to motivate employees.

The importance of realizing the different kinds of motivation was considered essential for leadership. Understanding whether a manager’s employees are motivated by financial incentives, or meaningful tasks makes it easier to lead. Especially in change leadership with employees not necessarily emotionally driven, seeking out what motivates them is essential. It was stated that in addition to social skills, money is also integral in motivating the employees. However, even though the interviewees know how the employees are motivated, they still have the limits of the organization and company, which they need to follow.

Regarding the rewarding system the company has in use, the aim of the objectives was discussed. The objectives and the leadership behind them influence the employees’

drive, commitment and initiative. The interviewees responded in differing ways when asked whether the objectives should be set so that they are easily approachable or just out of reach. All the interviewees said that the objectives need to be set so that they are achievable, even though one stated that they should still be fought for.

“If you set the objectives too high, why are you aiming for something like reaching the sun, you’ll never catch it.” (Mid management interviewee)

One issue that was connected to the objectives was the ambiguity so that they do not necessarily directly relate to one’s tasks nor does it consider the operative, daily work. Another issue was that in a rapidly changing organization, setting objectives with the coming 15 months in mind is difficult. The difficulty seems to rise from the diminishing of drive and commitment to the goals during the 15 months. Keeping up the employees’ interest to the objectives was considered as an unresolved issue as was achieving large scale goals in a limited time.

It was seen that after setting the objectives, it is the leader’s job to ensure that the employee has the tools, prioritization and support they need to achieve the set objectives. In practice the tools could entail activities, such as regular meeting where the status of the objectives is checked. This could help keep the needed drive, commitment and optimism in the goals.

This discussion is lacking the actuality of how the employees themselves feel about the setting of the objectives. It is clear, however, that the managers have differing views on the best practices and the issues the MBKR (Management by Key Results) holds.

4.2.4 Empathy

Empathy is the first category of social abilities and fourth of the subcategories of Goleman’s theory on emotional intelligence. Empathy is divided by Goleman into understanding others, developing others, service orientation, leveraging diversity and political awareness.

Empathy is perhaps a concept that is the easiest to connect with emotional intelligence. All the interviewees considered empathy an important topic. It was visible through a

supervisor conforming to personal issues in an employee's life and being able to prioritize the employee over the company's benefits. One interviewee stated that especially in personal topics, empathy is very important, but decisions are then made fact-based. This paints a picture of the roles of emotion and reason, clearly separate and serving specific, differing needs. This is an example of how reason and emotion do not exclude one another, but a leader can simultaneously consider both and be empathetic, but still use reason in decision making.

Empathy was visible not only through realizing when and which emotions should be expressed, but also through realizing when emotions should not be expressed. However, as mentioned above, one interviewee said that they did not want to express emotions when discussing with the management as they felt it would not be wanted or well received. This behavior is empathy-based, where one's difficulty in managing emotions is sensed by another, who then edits their behavior.

When asked whether the IT organization has empathetic people, one interviewee answered with percentages.

“Well if a 100% is a lot and 0 not at all, then maybe 60%, 55%?” (Mid management interviewee)

Empathy was considered a good value if it is something one has and that it is important for some that the supervisor reads the situation and helps through a situation or a conversation. A top-level manager stated that they have interviewed their own team leaders (mid-level managers) and stated that their situation is quite okay, regardless of the haste. However, one of their interviewed team leaders stated that in the weekly meetings they go through the strained workloads in their teams, but that it does not help.

“We go through the workloads in my team with my supervisor, and it's been horror lately, but it doesn't seem to help ... it might be a bit rough, but it seems like they try to show they care when they really don't.” (Mid management interviewee)

This mismatch in points of view rises important discussions. Pure empathy is not enough when leading, but it needs to be followed with actions. In this situation, however, there seems to be a gap in either information sharing or the use of emotional intelligence. This

can be seen through how caring, for example, is expressed and viewed and how the expressing of emotion and how it is perceived seem to differ quite significantly. As came up in the interview mentioned below, this could be due to a difference in how the employees discuss the topics with their near supervisor (mid manager) versus how they discuss the topics when a top-level manager comes and asks about how they are doing. So, the core of the issue seems to be in either the hierarchy that is in the way of openly expressing emotions (whether from an employee to a top manager or the other way around) or the lack of communicating emotions in the first place.

“Well I know situations where I... I naturally have one-to-one meetings with everyone, some issues rise up and I maybe bring them up in my own one-to-one and then I hear afterwards that my supervisor has also talked with my team and that there’s nothing wrong. Is it then the level, when you move from manager to director, so the answers change?” (Mid management interviewee)

When asked whose responsibility is an employee’s self-development, the interviewees’ answers could be divided into three categories. Some thought that the responsibility was mostly on the supervisor to discuss with the employee on what is their aim in the long run, begin mapping the path that way and it is then the supervisor’s job to realistically analyze whether the desired path is possible in the organization and to communicate the results. Some thought the responsibility is with the employees themselves to share their own ideas and interests regarding their career paths and some that it is a shared responsibility.

“I have people on my team who are maybe studying something on the side, something else IT-related, on their free time, that I may not even know. Well if they don’t bring it out to me, I can’t understand or direct that hey there might be something very interesting for you to do there.” (Mid management interviewee)

The employees’ development was considered important and it was felt that possibilities for development should be given. One interviewee stated that they encourage development and that they are not jealous of their employees.

“... and I’m not necessarily like jealous is someone would like to do something else. It’s ok, it’s a part of this.” (Mid management interviewee)

The lack of development paths was concerning to some. It was felt that the organization does not have a clear way to support the employees' career path design and implementation and that the organization has not offered teams the equal possibility to partake in trainings. It was suggested to involve the HR department and to map out the employees' career path and to give what they need to get there.

"... the best would be if HR was involved. That there would be a direct development path from seeing that this guy is wanted to be made into a leader in the future that this one might have what it takes." (Mid management interviewee)

Empathy was considered an important topic in the working life as was reason in making decisions. The base the questionnaire formed for the organization's empathy does not completely correspond to the answers of the interviews. Many managers took into consideration their employees' personal lives and their possible effects to their work. It seems thus that the issue is once again communication or the hierarchy. The top managers inquire the wellbeing of employees from the mid manager, which produces possible misunderstandings with the information. Even with possibly genuine intentions, the unwillingness to discuss wellbeing directly with a top manager makes it difficult for the atmosphere to improve. Another way of improvement is the employee development, for which the responsibility could be divided into three categories: mostly on the supervisor, the employees themselves and shared responsibility. Even if the responsibilities were clear, the development paths are scarce and unequal between teams.

4.2.5 Social skills

The final emotional intelligence ability according to Goleman is social skills. Goleman divided social skills into influence, communication, conflict management, leadership, change catalyst, building bonds, collaboration and cooperation, and team capabilities.

The role of social skills was considered important. However, in practice the views on social skills differed between the mid and top management. When asked about the importance of social skills in a leadership position, one interviewee firmly stated that social skills are very important as they support the togetherness and team spirit within

the team. They also state that in the management level this is not necessarily the case and that their own supervisor does not have good social skills and that it makes things difficult at times.

“Throughout time I have had all sorts of supervisors. I’ve had such brick walls, who don’t give answers or anything, who don’t basically have social skills and in my opinion, they shouldn’t be allowed to be supervisors at all.” (Mid management interviewee)

As an important category of social skills, communication has a significant role in building a socially skilled organization. Internal communication was difficult to define in the organization. When asked whether the internal communication works inside the organization, the answers were celebrating the organization’s communication as well as criticizing it. One of the difficulties was that in communicating from top down (CIO to management to service area managers to employees), the information can change along the way and reach the wrong people. Another issue is that there is so much information that needs to move.

An interviewee from the top level of the organization stated that they trust and have demanded that the information shared to the management flows lower as well. They also state that the biggest challenge in leading such a massive number of people is communication. The mass of people holds within so many different backgrounds and styles of adapting new information.

“We have noticed in the trainings that some say that it’s moving too slow, you can’t go this slow, faster faster. Because they understand it instantly, they might have a background there, so they understand. Some say that it’s too much, they can’t handle it. So we have a huge gap here, in a big organization, a huge gap. How do we catch up on it? What is the correct level message?” (Top management interviewee)

One interviewee stated that their supervisor brings information from the management meetings and that it works fine. They do see the issue with the information not reaching the correct people.

Another interviewee stated that the internal communication in the organization is quite bad. They argue that due to the organization’s large size, it is extremely difficult. They

state that there are too many channels that an employee is supposed to actively follow to gain all the information. They say that the content of the message is not the issue but instead the issue is that the information does not reach the necessary people and gets stuck somewhere.

In one interview, the interviewee stated that these are not simple topics and that solutions for the difficulties in communication have been searched and planned for a decade. They say that daily, issues arise where important topics between teams are not shared. These kinds of issues can be significant hindrances in collaboration and cooperation between teams. They ponder whether this is due to expertise on certain topics being only in certain teams, which is why the more technical specifications are not shared.

“... somehow we should make the peer communication better, you know sideways. That doesn’t necessarily always work so well with us.” (Top management interviewee)

But the interviewee recognizes their employees need for information. They see that the lack of information can be anxiety-provoking and that communication directly from the management-level should be added. Another interviewee hoped for more honesty in communication. They saw that overtly positive communication seems insincere and makes the communication less credible.

“... I think the reality needs to be communicated so that’s how you win the trust in a way.” (Mid management interviewee)

On the other hand, one interviewee stated that the internal communication of the organization has vastly improved. They feel that they get all the information they need to succeed in their work and that they share the information forward as quickly and directly as possible. They also emphasize the employees’ responsibility to search for the information.

In the interviews, another important theme regarding social skills, leadership skills, was discussed. When asked about their leadership skills, many of the interviewees had trouble defining themselves. One interviewee said they aim to get unprompted people in key positions so they can draw their own boundaries. Another discussed their honesty

and how it can sometimes be difficult to understand by employees. They also said they wish to be open, which was also said by another interviewee. The hope was that their employees could openly discuss issues with them. One openly stated that they lead with facts and with their competence.

What was also found was that the interviewees said they develop their leadership skills in differing ways. One stated that they read and try to keep up with the trends of leadership. One said that they have found through their work what is the best and most suitable way for them to lead. Another said they begin from the individuals and try to mirror how they should lead them. They also said that they do not follow theories in their leadership, but instead focus on the practice.

Some of the interviewees also discuss micromanaging. All of them stated that it was in fact a trait they did not have. They discussed how they trust their employees as they are experts in what they do, how the organization only has roles of responsibility and how they aim to give their employees space to work their best. One interviewee said that they are trying to move to a coaching type of leadership, where they would not offer ready answers but instead would challenge the team leaders. They also stated that they lead experts and do not see themselves as a micromanager, but instead trust that their employees know what they are doing. However, a supervisor in mid management that they are leading stated that they experience a significant amount of micromanaging. They said it is especially noticeable when their manager has too much time in their hands.

“I’m especially annoyed when it comes through via email always. And if it comes via email at 9p.m. with exclamation points and capital letters...” (Mid management interviewee)

Another mid-management interviewee also stated that micromanaging happens from top management in the organization. It was speculated that it stems from not having the courage to give decision making to those with the expertise.

An important part of social skills is also the ability to motivate others to change, which is a constant in the case organization. The changes in their organization rose different opinions. Most of the interviewees said they enjoy change and that the IT-business is a

constantly changing area of business. They said that change helps them grow and that it offers new challenges. However, one top-level manager said that they enjoy change, but that they also tire of it.

“Let’s say that if a big, big, big change were to come again, it would be... I can promise that I wouldn’t be very positive towards it. You get tired of it, the constant change.”
(Top management interviewee)

This interview took place a few days before another large-scale change was announced.

Their reaction to employees who do not enjoy changes appeared empathetic. One interviewee said that considering change frightening and connecting it to, for example, losing one’s job is understandable. They said that communicating the changes more transparently could ease some of the change dread.

The organization seems to have differences in how social skills are perceived in the management. An important theme that was discussed was communication within the organization. The communication was celebrated for the sufficient amount of it as well as criticized for it not properly flowing top down. The theme of leadership skills brought out a discussion on micromanaging, which divided opinions. All of the interviewed managers stated that they do not micromanage, however, it was not always seen similarly by their employees. This difference in opinion could be due to the lack of open and honest communication and feedback on management.

5 Discussion

This thesis and its analysis focused on finding answers to research questions “What kinds of thoughts do themes of emotional intelligence bring up in the managers of the organization?” and “What kind of relevance do the employees see in using emotions in the leadership of the organization?”. The study was conducted as a case study, which focused on the management of an IT organization. The material for the analysis was collected through a two-step process. First an overall picture of how the organization’s employees feel they are led was formed through a questionnaire sent to the employees. Through the questionnaire as well as David Goleman’s theory of emotional intelligence, questions were formed for semi-structured interviews of the IT organization’s top and mid-level managers.

The answers of the questionnaire pointed out that the employees felt that their emotions are considered more by their direct supervisors than the top management. Even still, the numbers for the direct supervisors were not that high (56% yes). Most of the employees felt that their supervisors and the top management do not use emotions in their communication even though a vast majority (84%) wished that they did. The employees also felt that mid-management’s communication was better than the top managements. The responses’ direct connection to hierarchy would require more intensive research as the responses for the organization’s hierarchy left a lot of room for interpretation and lacked in facts.

The thoughts on utilizing emotions in communications could be divided into four categories based on the answers: Motivation, respect, peer support and authenticity. Sensing emotions in communication and interaction was considered motivating, stating that it motivates to work harder. Emotions are also seen as producing the feeling of respect, where the people would feel their worth more and that the work they do, matters. Regarding peer support, the respondents talked about cooperation and that through sharing emotions, the employees could connect with each other more and share the difficulties they face. Authenticity was a theme that came up in many of the answers. The employees wished that emotions would be expressed more but emphasized that the emotions need to be authentic and not glued on.

In some of the interviews, the topic of self-awareness was often mistaken as equaling self-confidence. However, as mentioned earlier on in this study, self-confidence is only a part of self-awareness. Self-awareness was also connected to success, so that in a self-aware organization everyone contributes to others' success. Self-awareness was considered integral as the negative effects of a leader lacking self-awareness could be significant. None of the interviewees discussed how self-awareness is an intrapersonal process, which is based in one's core and is not simply a work-related action.

When discussing themes related to self-regulation a significant finding was the gap between the different levels of management. There is a difference between how the employees experience mid management's expressions of emotions, how the employees experience the top management's emotions as well as how the mid management experience the top management's expressions of emotions. The answers on the questionnaire as well as interviews made it apparent that the top management feels to be afar. The employees and mid-level management seem to be more liberal when it comes to expressing and considering emotions. They emphasize the weight of employees' personal lives, find expressing emotions humane and strive to develop their employees. Most importantly, they also see the top-level management as afar. The instinctive reason behind this could be the hierarchy of the organization. However, as the mid management answered questions about the top management in a similar way as the employees, the issue seems to be elsewhere such as between the levels of management. On a deeper analysis, as one of the interviewees stated, showing emotions is not necessarily fundamentally easy. It could be due to the culturally or socially constructed phenomena, where reason is still seen as easier and more respectable than emotions.

Regarding motivation, the interviewees pointed out that there are multiple ways of motivating their employees, whether through financial incentives or by customizing the work. They all stated that the objectives of the rewarding system in use in the company must be set so that they are achievable. They mentioned several issues with the current system, stating that the objectives are too ambiguous, the organization changes too quickly and that 15 months is a long time to think ahead in a rapidly changing organization.

Perhaps one of the most significant issues in the organization's empathy is either internal communication, lack of emotional intelligence skills or hierarchy. When a top-level manager and their direct employee, a mid-level manager, were interviewed without knowledge of each other, an issue in expressing empathy was organically brought out. The top-level manager stated how it is important for them to discuss the workloads and wellbeing of all their employees and the mid-level manager stated how many times they have flagged that their team has too much work. The situation remains the same regardless. The mid-level manager had then found out that their supervisor had spoken with the team and found nothing wrong. As came up in the interview, this could be due to a gap in communication. It could be that when a top manager tries to discuss these workload themes with the employees, they do not feel comfortable enough to respond honestly. It is then worth to think about, whether it is the hierarchy that is in the way of honestly expressing emotions both ways or whether it is the lack of expressing emotions in the first place. Thus, at the core of the issue could be either social skills and especially communication or the lack of expressing empathy and the emotions flowing downward in the organization. These issues with hierarchy could be eased by bringing the top management closer to the employees and through that forming stronger bonds between the employees and the management, regardless of the level.

Social skills were considered important in the position of leader. One visible way of portraying social skills is communication, which in the organization was seen in varying ways. Some interviewees stated that the communication works and that the information flows as it is supposed to, some emphasized also the employees' responsibility to ask for the information and some said that the information just does not flow. This would indicate at least some level of issues in the internal communication of the organization.

To conclude, three main points can be formed from the questionnaire answers as well as the interviews. Firstly, the questionnaire answers signal the employees' hope for visible emotions in the management's leadership as well as their communication. What is also apparent is that the top management feels distant from the employees in comparison to the mid-level managers, which could be due to a sharply rising hierarchy after the mid-management level. Secondly, there is a difference in viewpoints between the top management and the employees and the middle and top managements

regarding expressions of empathy. This difference is seen through the employees hoping for more emotions and empathy in the management and the top management thinking they express their empathy. A similar setting is also with the middle and top management levels. This difference in views could be due to expressing emotions being fundamentally difficult and foreign. Thirdly, the issues in the difference of views in the organization can be attributed to either the lack of sufficient communication, issues in hierarchy or the lack of emotional intelligence skills such as social skills. The issues were seen through the positioning of the employees and mid-level managers against the top management stating that they feel distant and almost unempathetic. The interviews made the need for honest, empathetic and straight-forward communication clear as the top and mid-level managers have a gap in how what is said or done is meant to be perceived.

6 Conclusion

As this study points out, there is a clear difference in views between the important role employees see in leading and communicating with emotions and the way that they are utilized in the management. Even though only 56% of the employees feel that the mid-level managers and 28% feel that the top management pays enough attention to their emotions, the interviewed top-level managers clearly see the importance of, for example, empathy. It seems as though the mid-level management is closer to the employees but as far from the top-level management as the employees.

There could be several reasons for this mismatch in viewpoints. One being that emotions are still often seen as lesser than rationality in making decisions and managing, for example, change by people in high positions and traditional companies in society. Often these opinions accompany statements in which the importance of emotions, empathy, self-awareness (etc.) is discussed. This means that even though emotions are seen as important and as serving a function, they should not interfere with decision making. Another reason could be that the top management does not necessarily show emotional intelligence due to personal, cultural or environmental factors. However, as these skills are intrapersonal abilities, they are something a person develops within themselves and in interaction with others and are therefore abilities that can be developed. This requires an openness for learning new things as well as the ability to be self-aware. As empathy, for example, is a person's internal emotion, it is closely connected to one's ability to self-development and personal experiences.

As internal communication seems to also be a significant issue and possibly a contributor to the feeling of lacking emotional intelligence, the gap between the employees and the top management should be worked on. Paying attention to the hierarchy of the organization and taking weight off from having information flow downwards by being in direct communication more, could be fixes for these kinds of issues. Even if the emotional intelligence skills of the top management are already developed and utilized, they do not necessarily show to the employees through all the levels of the organization. As facts can be forwarded in a message, emotions cannot always.

In case emotional intelligence skills are wanted to be developed, the internet is full of articles and studies on how to increase emotional intelligence in leadership, not to mention how to manage change. However, I do feel as if the main point should be to know thy self. Healthily empathetic leaders are more easily approachable and relatable. It is also worth considering how happy employees make happier companies. Fisher (2010: 404) found out that happiness at the person and group level is connected to for example to a company's core and contextual performance. I believe anyone in an employee or managerial position can imagine the quality of work they produce when happy and when tired, sad or frustrated.

Many change management programs exist that aim to ease the negative effects of a changing organizations. Prosci has formed a program called ADKAR, where change is divided into different categories which all emphasize different parts of change. PulseLearning offer courses and assistance in delivering changes in organizations. However, these programs often lack authenticity and feel as if they are a quick way to comprehend what kind of leadership is needed to manage through a change. Change is human psychology and I dare to argue that in a changing organization, emotional intelligence will take leaders far. In a practical level this means developing and prioritizing emotional intelligence skills as they are an ability that can be learned on a personal and organizational level (Goleman 1998:315).

Many of the issues that came up in this study could be aided with honest and timely communication as well as utilizing emotional intelligence, both, from the management to the employees as well as employees to management. As mentioned earlier on in this study, the case organization has produced many outlets for internal communication. However, it is not necessarily the quantity of the communication but the quality in which should also be invested. Through honest communication, the uncertainty in the employees could be reduced and through utilizing emotional intelligence and adjusting the workloads the organization could see extensive benefits in employee satisfaction.

The theory and methods used contributed well to the aim of this study. Through focusing on all levels of the organization, the results of the thesis were more comprehensive as well as informative instead of focusing only on how the employees or how the managers experience the themes. The material was analyzed and thematized

through Goleman's theory, which offered a clear base for the themes of emotional intelligence. However, a few things should be considered when discussing the results. As stated with the analysis, culture

The results of this study are most probably not unique nor do they consider the impact of age, gender or length of career. The relevance of emotional intelligence is clearly seen, but the process of utilizing it is still underway. This study was conducted at a time, when self-development is gaining more attention and so will most probably also be extending to workplaces as well. As the study was conducted through interviews and a questionnaire, it reflects the subjective opinions of the people working in the organization instead of an absolute truth. However, it can also be argued whether there is an absolute truth when discussing or studying emotions and experiences. It should be noted that each organization is to some extent unique in its leadership and thus generalizing the findings of this thesis directly to other organizations does not work. It should also be noted that this study did not focus on the demographics such as age, gender or other items related to the background of the respondents and the interviewees, which then disables a further research on how these personal attributes impact the answers and thus analysis. It does, however, contribute to a larger societal discussion on leadership, wellbeing and emotional intelligence.

Even though emotional intelligence has a history in theories and science, it has also begun gaining attention in the business world. Robotics, the internet of things and the automatizing world require emotional intelligence in certain tasks. For future research, it would be interesting to continue studying stereotypically stiff organizations and their leadership and to raise a conversation on how emotional intelligence could possibly solve many of the issues in traditional organizations. As this study did not focus on the demographics of the interviewees and respondents, further research on how, for example, a manager's background influences their views on leadership and emotions would be beneficial to conduct. Also, research on how emotional intelligence is formed in communication and how it shows in semantics, pragmatics and syntax would be fruitful to research further as well, as a key theme of leadership and emotional intelligence is communication.

7 Bibliography

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8 Appendices

8.1 Appendix – questionnaire questions in Finnish

1. Kuinka onnistuneeksi koet YIT:n IT-transitioprojektin tässä vaiheessa?
 - a. Täysin onnistuneeksi
 - b. Jokseenkin onnistuneeksi
 - c. En onnistuneeksi enkä epäonnistuneeksi
 - d. Jokseenkin epäonnistuneeksi
 - e. Täysin epäonnistuneeksi
2. Kerro lyhyesti, miksi koet projektin onnistumisen näin
3. Minkälaisia haasteita olet kohdannut projektin aikana? Erittäin haastava, melko haastava, melko vaivaton, ei lainkaan haastava, en osaa sanoa.
 - a. Projektille annettu aikataulu
 - b. Projektin laajuus
 - c. Omien vastuiden ymmärtäminen/tunnistaminen
 - d. Työtehtäviesi priorisointi esimiehen toimesta
 - e. Työtehtäviesi priorisointi omasta toimestasi
 - f. Liian vähäinen projektin kokonaisseuranta
4. Voit avata alle muita projektin aikana kohtaamiasi haasteita
5. Kuinka onnistuneeksi koet IT-transitioprojektin sisäisen viestinnän? Täysin onnistuneeksi, jokseenkin onnistuneeksi, en onnistuneeksi enkä epäonnistuneeksi, jokseenkin epäonnistuneeksi, täysin epäonnistuneeksi.
 - a. Projektin sisäinen viestintä tiimien esimiehiltä tiimin jäsenille
 - b. Projektin sisäinen viestintä IT-managementilta tiimin jäsenille
 - c. Projektin sisäinen viestintä tiimien jäseniltä tiimien esimiehille
 - d. Projektin sisäinen viestintä tiimien jäseniltä IT-managementille
6. Koetko IT:ssä olevan vakiintuneita toimintatapoja sisäisessä viestinnässä (esim. hierarkiaan, henkilökohtaisen elämän kuulumisiin tai tunteiden ilmaisuun liittyviä)?
 - a. Kyllä
 - b. Ei
7. Koetko transitioprojektissa olevan vakiintuneita toimintatapoja sisäisessä viestinnässä (esim. hierarkiaan, henkilökohtaisen elämän kuulumisiin tai tunteiden ilmaisuun liittyviä)?
 - a. Kyllä
 - b. Ei
8. Jos vastasit "kyllä", kerro lyhyesti, minkälaisia vakiintuneita käytäntöjä koet IT:n ja/tai projektin sisäisessä viestinnässä. Täsmennä vastauksessasi liittykö se IT:seen vai projektiin.
9. Kuinka onnistuneeksi koet muutosprosessien johtamisen YIT:llä yleisesti?
 - a. Täysin onnistuneeksi
 - b. Jokseenkin onnistuneeksi
 - c. En onnistuneeksi enkä epäonnistuneeksi
 - d. Jokseenkin epäonnistuneeksi
 - e. Täysin epäonnistuneeksi
10. Kuinka onnistuneeksi koet IT-transitioprojektin johtamisen?

- a. Täysin onnistuneeksi
 - b. Jokseenkin onnistuneeksi
 - c. En onnistuneeksi enkä epäonnistuneeksi
 - d. Jokseenkin epäonnistuneeksi
 - e. Täysin epäonnistuneeksi
11. Koetko saavasi tarvittavaa tietoa organisaatiosta ja organisaatiomuutoksista esimieheltäsi liittyen IT-transitioprojektiin?
- a. Kyllä
 - b. Ei
12. Minkälaisia haasteita olet kokenut tiedonkulussa?
13. Mistä olisit toivonut saavasi enemmän tai nopeampaa tietoa?
14. Arvostus. Kyllä, ei, en osaa sanoa.
- a. Koetko, että sinua arvostetaan työpaikalla?
 - b. Koetko, että työtäsi projektissa arvostetaan
 - c. Koetko, että ehdotuksillasi on projektissa merkitystä
15. Kerro lyhyesti, kuinka arvostus näkyy.
16. Tunteiden huomioiminen. Kyllä, ei, en osaa sanoa.
- a. Koetko voivasi ilmaista tunteitasi vapaasti työpaikalla?
 - b. Koetko, että tunteisiisi on kiinnitetty tarpeeksi huomiota projektin aikana esimiehesi toimesta?
 - c. Koetko, että tunteisiisi on kiinnitetty tarpeeksi huomiota projektin aikana IT-managementin toimesta?
17. Kerro lyhyesti, kuinka tunteiden huomioiminen näkyy.
18. Kerro lyhyesti, minkälaisia muutoksia olet huomannut tunteidesi huomioimisessa ennen IT-transitioprojektia ja sen aikana.
19. Koetko, että johto (tiimisi esimies, IT-management) ilmaisee tunteitaan viestinnässään? Kyllä, ei.
20. Miten tunteiden ilmaisu tai sen puute ilmenee?
21. Onko sinusta toivottavaa, että tiimien esimiehet ja IT-management ilmaisevat viestinnässään tunteitaan? Kyllä, ei.
22. Kerro lyhyesti, miksi toivot/et toivo näin.
23. Koetko, että tiimien esimiehet ja IT-management ylläpitävät positiivista ilmapiiriä? Kyllä, ei.
24. Kerro lyhyesti, kuinka tämä näkyy.

25. Kerro lyhyesti, minkälaisia muutoksia olet huomannut johdon tunteiden ilmaisussa ennen IT-transitioprojektia ja sen aikana?
26. Koetko, että omalla käyttäytymiselläsi on merkitystä projektin ilmapiirin rakentumisessa? Kyllä, ei.
27. Koetko projektin johdon (esimiehet, IT-management) olevan hierarkkista? Kyllä, ei.
28. Kuinka hierarkia tai sen puute näkyvät?
29. Jos koet johdon hierarkkiseksi, koetko sen ongelmaksi? Kyllä, ei.
30. Minkälaista tukea ja apua toivoisit esimieheltäsi muutosten aikana?
- a. Säännöllistä keskustelua kahden kesken
 - b. Säännöllistä keskustelua tiimissä
 - c. Ulkopuolisen hyvinvoinnintarjoajan palveluita
 - d. Hyvinvointikoulutuksia
 - e. Muutuskoulutuksia
 - f. Muu, mikä?
31. Minkälaista tukea ja apua toivoisit IT-managementiltä muutosten aikana?
- a. Säännöllistä keskustelua kahden kesken
 - b. Säännöllistä keskustelua tiimissä
 - c. Ulkopuolisen hyvinvoinnintarjoajan palveluita
 - d. Hyvinvointikoulutuksia
 - e. Muutuskoulutuksia
 - f. Muu, mikä?
32. Onko sinulla jotakin kommentoitavaa tai lisättävää vastauksiisi?
33. Kuinka monta vuotta olet ollut töissä YIT:n IT:ssä?
34. Kuinka usein työsi liittyy IT-transitioprojektiin?
- a. Päivittäin
 - b. Viikoittain
 - c. Kuukausittain
 - d. Harvemmin kuin kuukausittain
35. Kuinka monessa muutosprojektissa olet ollut mukana YIT:n sisällä?
36. Mikä on tittelisi?

37. Tämän kyselyn kysymykset ovat olleet täysin anonyymejä. Mikäli kuitenkin haluat osallistua mahdolliseen haastatteluun, voit kirjoittaa alle nimesi niin olen tarvittaessa yhteydessä, kiitos!

8.2 Appendix – questionnaire questions in English

1. How successful do you see the project as at this stage?
 - a. Completely successful
 - b. Somewhat successful
 - c. Not successful or unsuccessful
 - d. Somewhat unsuccessful
 - e. Completely unsuccessful
2. Describe briefly why you see it like this.
3. What kinds of challenges have you faced throughout the project? Very challenging, quite challenging, quite unchallenging, not at all challenging, I don't know.
 - a. The timetable given to the project
 - b. The scope of the project
 - c. Understanding/recognizing your own responsibilities
 - d. The prioritizing of your tasks by your superior
 - e. The prioritizing of your tasks by yourself
 - f. Too narrow overall project follow-up
4. You can open up about other challenges you've faced within the project below.
5. How successful do you see the internal communication of the project as? Completely successful, somewhat successful, not successful or unsuccessful, somewhat unsuccessful, completely unsuccessful.
 - a. Internal communication in the project from team leaders to team members
 - b. Internal communication in the project from IT-management to team members
 - c. Internal communication in the project from team members to team leaders

- d. Internal communication in the project from team members to IT-management
- 6. Do you feel there are unsaid rules in the internal communication of IT (e.g. related to hierarchy, personal life or emotions)? Yes, no.
- 7. Do you feel there are unsaid rules in the internal communication of the IT-transition project (e.g. related to hierarchy, personal life or emotions)? Yes, no.
- 8. If you answered "Yes", explain shortly what kinds of unsaid rules you see in the internal communication of IT/the transition project. Please specify in your answer which one you're talking about.
- 9. How successful do you see the leadership of change processes at YIT generally? Completely successful, somewhat successful, not successful or unsuccessful, somewhat unsuccessful, completely unsuccessful.
- 10. How successful do you see the leadership of the IT-transition project? Completely successful, somewhat successful, not successful or unsuccessful, somewhat unsuccessful, completely unsuccessful.
- 11. Do you feel you get the needed information from your supervisor regarding the organization and organizational changes in the IT-transition project? Yes, no.
- 12. What kinds of challenges have you faced with the information flow?
- 13. What would you hope/have hoped to get more or faster information on?
- 14. Valuing. Yes, no, I don't know.
 - a. Do you feel valued at work?
 - b. Do you feel like your work in the project is valued?
 - c. Do you feel your suggestions matter in the project?
- 15. Explain shortly how the valuing and appreciation show.
- 16. Paying attention to emotions. Yes, no, I don't know.
 - a. Do you feel like you can express your emotions freely at work?
 - b. Do you feel that your team leader has paid enough attention to your emotions in the project?
 - c. Do you feel that IT-management has paid enough attention to your emotions in the project?
- 17. Explain shortly how paying attention to your feelings shows.

18. Explain briefly what kinds of changes you have noticed in paying attention to your feelings before the project and during it.
19. Do you feel that the management (team leaders and IT-management) express their emotions in their communication? Yes, no.
20. How does the expressing, or lack of expressing, of emotions show?
21. Do you find it desirable that team leaders and IT-management express emotions in their communication? Yes, no.
22. Explain briefly why you find it/don't find it desirable?
23. Do you feel that the team leaders and IT-management maintain a positive atmosphere? Yes, no.
24. Explain briefly how it is visible.
25. Explain briefly what kinds of changes you have noticed in management (team leaders and IT-management) expressing their emotions before the IT-transition project and during it.
26. Do you feel like your behavior matters in constructing the project's atmosphere? Yes, no
27. Do you feel that the project's management (team leaders and IT-management) is hierarchical? Yes, no.
28. How does the hierarchy, or the lack of it, show?
29. If you see the management as hierarchical, do you see the hierarchy as a problem? Yes, no.
30. What kind of support and help would you hope for from your supervisor during changes?
 - a. Regular conversations 1 to 1
 - b. Regular conversations in the team
 - c. Services from an external wellness provider
 - d. Wellness trainings
 - e. Change trainings
 - f. Other
31. What kind of support and help would you hope for from IT-management during changes?
 - a. Regular conversations 1 to 1

- b. Regular conversations in the team
 - c. Services from an external wellness provider
 - d. Wellness trainings
 - e. Change trainings
 - f. Other
32. Do you have anything to comment or add to your answers?
33. How many years have you been working in YIT IT?
34. How often is your work related to the IT-transition project?
- a. Daily
 - b. Weekly
 - c. Monthly
 - d. Less than monthly
35. How many change processes have you been a part of at YIT?
36. What is your title?
37. The questions in this questionnaire have been completely anonymous. In case you would like to participate in an interview (if needed), you can submit your name below and I will be in touch if needed, thank you!

8.3 Appendix – interview questions

1. Miten kuvailisit itseäsi johtajana?
2. Kokeiletko johtamisessasi eri strategioita?
3. Kehitätkö johtamistasi säännöllisesti?
4. Johtaminen tuntuu pitkään olleen järkipohjaista, miksi koet sen olleen niin?
5. Johtaminen rakentuu ihmissuhteista, kuinka koet tämän? Muodostuuko esteeksi:
 - a. Hierarkia?
 - b. Perinteisistä ihmissuhteista poikkeava ympäristö?
6. Millaisia piirteitä koet, että hyvä johtaja omaa?
7. Kuinka koet esihenkilön vastuun työntekijän kehityksessä?
8. Voivatko esihenkilö ja työntekijä olla myös hyviä ystäviä?
9. Miten koet ryhmäyttämisen?

10. Kuinka tärkeänä koet työntekijöiden itsetietoisuuden?
11. Kuinka tärkeänä koet esihenkilön itsetietoisuuden?
12. Kuinka koet itsetietoisuuden näkyvän ja vaikuttavan työilmapiiriin?
13. Kuinka koet tunteet työpaikalla?
14. Koetko helpoksi ilmaista tunteita töissä?
15. Koetko toivottavaksi, että työntekijät ilmaisevat tunteita töissä?
16. Koetko huomioivasi työntekijöidesi tunteet?
 - a. Miten?
17. Miten koet empatian työpaikalla?
18. Miten koet empatian esihenkilönä?
19. Osa itsesäätelyä ja siten tunneälyä on kyky ylläpitää toimintaa stressaavissa tilanteissa, mitä mieltä olet tästä?
20. Koetko, että stressinsietokyky on yksilöstä itsestään kiinni vai, että työyhteisön tulisi tarjota työkaluja sen käsittelyyn?
21. Koetko työn tavoitteiden ja tasojen asettamisen olevan esihenkilön vai työntekijän tehtävä?
22. Mitä mieltä olet YIT:n MBKR-järjestelmästä?
23. Koetko olevan parempi, että tavoitteita asetetaan liian korkealle vai saavutettavaksi?
24. Minkälaisia työkaluja tarjoat työntekijöille tavoitteiden saavuttamiseksi?
 - a. Haluaisitko tarjota enemmän työkaluja?
25. Mikä on näkemyksesi työpaikasta ja positiivisuudesta?
26. Miten koet johtamiesi työntekijöiden epäonnistumiset?
27. Miten suhtaudut omiin epäonnistumisiisi?
28. Tuleeko muutostilanteesta ensin positiivinen vai negatiivinen konnotaatio?
29. Kaikille muutos ei ole helppoa, kuinka koet tukevasi muutoksen kanssa kamppailevia?
30. Miten hyödynnät ”pehmeitä arvoja” omassa johtamisessasi?
31. Miten koet IT:n sisäisen viestinnän?

32. Koetko viestinnässä olevan kuilu jossakin kohtaa?
33. Työuupumus milleniaalien keskuudessa on jo muodostumassa normiksi, miksi luulet, että ilmiö näkyy selkeiten nuorten naisten keskuudessa?
34. Nykyään on nousussa myös grindaus-kulttuuri, jossa työnteko ja urakehitys glorifioidaan ja netti on täynnä ”don’t quit when you’re tired, quit when you’re done”-tyyppisiä lainauksia. Mistä luulet tämän ilmiön tulevan?